ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE ARTICULATION IN EUROPE: CONCEPTUAL AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK IN A MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Enhancing the Effectiveness of Social Dialogue Articulation in Europe: Conceptual and Analytical Framework in a Multi-Level Governance Perspective

This paper elaborates a conceptual and analytical framework to study social dialogue articulation and its effectiveness in the EU. The framework derives from a multi-level governance perspective that seeks to account for the diversity of state and non-state actors involved at various levels of social dialogue. Effectiveness of social dialogue is conceptualized as the ability of social dialogue committees to deliver specific outcomes, while the effectiveness of social dialogue articulation in conceptualized as the ability to transpose social dialogue outcomes achieved at one level of social dialogue to another level of social dialogue and to implement EU-level social dialogue outcomes in nationally specific institutional and legislative conditions of diverse EU members states. The framework for analysis also includes three interrelated methodological suggestions for empirical study, including a quantitative survey among social partners, qualitative interviews for in-depth insights as well as network analysis in order to identify strong ties between involved actors that inform expectations on effective articulation of social dialogue between national and EU-level social dialogue structures.

Keywords: social dialogue, articulation, EU-level social dialogue, multi-level governance

JEL Classification: J08, J50, J51, J81, P52, Z13

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Introduction

Social dialogue (SD), embracing interactions, such as negotiation, consultation or exchange of information, between or among social partners and public authorities, has since long been regarded as one of the prime building blocks of the European social model (European Commission, 2015a; 2015b). However, in the last decade, both the European social model and the actors involved in SD have been under severe pressure. The economic crisis starting in 2008 caused financial constraints that, together with the burden of an ageing population and technological change, put SD under pressure because of the pressure to implement budget cuts in employment and social policies (c. f. European Commission, 2015b; European Commission, 2016).

Against this background, the European Commission has taken several initiatives to give a new impetus to SD. The 2015 initiative "*A New Start for Social Dialogue*" attempts to strengthen SD both at the EU level and in the member states, whereas particular attention is paid to states where social dialogue has been less developed. An evaluation of the extent to which such initiatives are successful is closely related to two factors. The first one is the concept of *SD effectiveness*, or the preconditions and ability for SD to produce relevant outcomes (c. f. Eurofound 2019). The second one is acknowledging the fact that SD occurs at various interconnected levels in the EU, which need to be studied in a relational perspective. *SD articulation* then refers to ways in which decisions, outcomes and actors' positions at one level of SD influence the decisions, outcomes and positions of actors at other levels of SD. An effective SD articulation then refers to the action at one level of SD as a consequence of action at another level of SD. For example, effective top-down SD articulation embraces processes of national-level bipartite or tripartite negotiations between social partners and the government that took place in the process of successfully transposing an agreement reached by bipartite or tripartite SD at the EU level to national legislation. Bottom-up articulation of SD refers to interactions between national-level and EU-level actors in order to ensure that a topic of interest to national actors has been successfully integrated into the agenda of the relevant EU-level SD structures.

In light of the above, this paper develops a conceptual and analytical framework to guide empirical research on effectiveness of SD and its articulation. It also presents a feasible methodological framework that accounts for the diversity of EU member states' SD practices and traditions. The framework is derived from a multi-level governance perspective on SD, which accounts for the growing involvement of non-state actors in policy-making, supra-national governance structures, dynamically changing preferences of national and sectoral social partners, power relations and the substantial diversity in industrial relations and governance structures across the EU member states (Marginson and Keune 2012). Together, these factors imply strong interdependencies between different actors and levels of SD.

The paper is structured as follows. The first part places the relevance of SD articulation in the context of structural diversity of SD in the EU. A summary of EU-level SD structures and types of outcomes is complemented with an insight into national diversities in SD and the most relevant topics addressed in national SD structures. Analysing the extent to which these topics are aligned with the agenda of EU-level SD structures is the first step in studying effectiveness of SD articulation between the national and EU-level of SD. The second part of the paper develops an in-depth analytical framework for studying SD articulation in a multi-level governance perspective. The third part presents several interconnected methodologies that are together feasible for collecting and analysing evidence on the functioning of SD at various levels, interactions between actors and evaluation of how effective SD articulation is. The fourth part summarizes the key aspects of the framework developed.

European diversity of social dialogue

In the EU, social dialogue occurs at many different levels: at the EU level, national level and sub-national level; within as well as across sectors; and it involves public and private actors. Since processes within the EU-level social dialogue (ESD) and the EU-level sectoral social dialogue (ESSD) interact with social dialogue processes in the member states, previous research has often approached social dialogue in the EU as a one-dimensional, linear and top-down process (c. f. Marginson and Keune 2012). In this setting, social partners were believed to strongly depend on the EU level in terms of the implementation of framework agreements in the national institutional systems of the EU member states. While more

recent work has argued that social partners are increasingly exercising their autonomy, the role of the EC's influence as well and the role of national governments in this process should not be understated (Smismans 2008; Weber 2010). Understanding empirical features of SD at the national and the EU levels is a precondition to elaborate conceptual and analytical tools to study the dynamics of SD at various levels and SD articulation between these levels.

- ***National-level social dialogue***

National-level social dialogue across the EU member states resembles a diversity in actors' structures, institutional resources, practices and culture of dialogue and the legitimacy assigned to social dialogue and participating actors. EU enlargements, especially after 2004, have further widened the diversity in the models, institutions and governance of industrial relations in Europe. To capture this diversity as an underlying factor for assessing SD effectiveness, the existing literature categorized the EU member states into several clusters with shared industrial relations characteristics. Bechter et al. (2012) and Eurofound (2018a) distinguish between the Nordic organized corporatism, Western liberal pluralism, Southern state centred industrial relations system, Central-Western social partnership and a mixed Central-Eastern European cluster. While the diversity of industrial relations systems in itself is large in the CEE region, we integrate the categorization of Bohle and Greskovits (2012) into the framework of Bechter et al. (2012) and Eurofound (2018a) and arrive at 6 country clusters (see Table 1).

Table 1 Country clusters industrial relations systems across the EU

National industrial relations systems	Organized corporatism (Nordic)	Liberal pluralism (West)	State-centred (Southern)	Social partnership (Central-West)	Embedded neoliberal (Central-East)	Neoliberal (North-East, South-East)
Member states	Denmark, Finland, Sweden	Cyprus, Ireland, Malta, the United Kingdom	France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain	Austria, Belgium, Germany, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Slovenia	Czechia, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia	Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania

Source: authors' classification based on Bechter et al. (2012), Eurofound (2018a), Bohle and Greskovits (2012), European Commission (2009: 49-50).

Bechter et al. (2018) found that an established structure of sectoral social dialogue is an important institutional precondition for effective involvement of sectoral actors into EU-level sectoral social dialogue. In addition, actors' associational power, measured by membership

and bargaining coverage, as well as next to the agenda of social dialogue committees in particular national contexts are also important indicators of (a) actors' capacity to engage in and contribute to SD at various levels; and (b) the effectiveness of SD articulation due to the similarity of topics in national and EU-level SD structures (ibid.).

A qualitative in-depth analysis then ideally captures the diversity of national SD structures and processes by focusing on member states that represent each cluster from Table 1. In addition, a country selection for empirical research should embrace a balanced sample of large and small member states that are also likely to have different SD structures. Especially for CEE countries, there is little in-depth empirical knowledge on their SD articulation and linkages between the national and the EU-level SD. In addition to industrial relations diversity, the selection of countries should present an interesting mix of cases where social dialogue has served an important role in negotiated governance (e.g., in Portugal and Sweden), where the role of the state in social dialogue has played a prominent role (e.g., in France), and where social dialogue structures are still in the making, among others, through capacity-building initiatives channelled from the EU to the national level (e.g., Estonia and to some extent the Visegrad countries including Slovakia). Moreover, recent country experiences are relevant for the EU-level policy-making and debates within the EU-level social dialogue structures (e.g., the implementation of social pacts and increase in labour migration in Ireland).

- *EU-level social dialogue*

At the EU-level, recognized social partner organizations are established at cross-sectoral level and at the sector level. These social partners are involved in tripartite and bipartite SD respectively. Tripartite EU level social dialogue occurs in two distinct forms of information exchange with involvement of social partners into the EU economic governance. The first is the *Tripartite social summit* that relates to the Council meetings and involves the President of the EU council, the President of the Commission and the President of the Council in office next to relevant cross-sector EU-level social partners. The Summit usually meets twice a year immediately before the spring and autumn European Council meetings. The agenda of the Summit is always closely linked to the priorities subsequently discussed in the European

Council. The second form of information exchange between the social partners and EU representatives is the *European macroeconomic governance* through the Macroeconomic Dialogue, established in June 1999. In this forum, representatives of social partners at EU level are invited to hold a dialogue with the European Council, the European Commission and the European Central Bank in order to facilitate a mutually supportive interaction between monetary, fiscal and structural policies conducive to non-inflationary growth. In recent years the most relevant platform for discussion within tripartite SD is the *European Semester* producing country-specific recommendations that shall inform macroeconomic governance in particular member states. Although this form of EU-level impact on national policies in the member states represents a soft tool within SD articulation, non-binding outcomes of social dialogue remain equally important than the binding ones (c. f. Marginson and Keune 2013).

The Social Dialogue Committee (SDC) is the main European forum for **bipartite social dialogue** at the cross-industry level. It normally convenes three times per year. The SDC consists of a maximum 64 representatives of social partners equally divided between the employers' organizations and trade unions and including the EU Secretariats of the cross-industry social partners, as well as representatives from the national member organisations of EU-level cross-industry organizations on each side. The parties negotiate and adopt joint texts, plans and follow up on their joint initiatives.

In addition to SD at cross-industry level, the European Commission supports social dialogue at sectoral level. As foreseen in Commission Decision (1998/500/EC), sectoral SD committees have a dual aim. First, they are a platform to consult and inform the European sectoral social partners regarding developments that bear social implications in the sector for which they are established. Second, sectoral SD committees are the forum in which the autonomous social partners develop and promote bipartite SD at sectoral level. In addition, there is tripartite of concertation within sectoral social dialogue committees (for instance on transport or energy policy). At bipartite ESD and ESSD committee meetings, EU-level organizations of trade unions and employers propose content and form of the outcomes in accordance with the Article 154 (2) TFEU. The appendix of this paper provides an overview of EU-level sectoral SD (ESSD) committees and participating organizations. Bechter et al.

(2018) provide an overview of activity within particular ESSD committees as well as the most important topics of their concern. Their analysis shows that sectors more exposed to globalized markets and production network are more concerned with industrial policy than sectors more sheltered from exposure to international pressures (Bechter et al. 2018).

The types of outcomes of bipartite and tripartite EU-level SD are summarized in Table 2. The most powerful result of EU-level SD structures is the Agreement and may have two forms. It either binds social partners to implement the agreement at the national level, or it authorizes the European Commission to submit the Agreement to the Council. If the agreement is approved it is legally binding for the member states as any other piece of legislation. Nevertheless, this instrument is rarely used (see Table 2). Most of the ESD and ESSD meetings lead to the adoption of non-binding joint opinions (European Commission 2015a). Earlier evidence shows that in the past decade the incidence of agreements decreases while the number of non-binding outcomes in form of joint opinions and declarations increases (Bechter et al. 2018, Marginson and Keune 2013).

Table 2 Typology of joint social partner texts and outcomes of EU-level SD

Document category	Sub-category	Follow-up measures	Outcome legitimacy	Occurrence
Agreement Council decision	Implementation by Directives (enter EU legal process, facilitated by the EC)	Implementation reports	Outcome submitted to EU legal procedure that foresees adopting legislation	Rarely (2010-2012 below 10, in 2012 - 2014 none)
Autonomous agreement	Implementation by social partners (Art. 155)	Implementation reports	Outcome implemented by social partners at the national level	Rarely (2010-2012 below 10, in 2012 - 2014 none)
Process-oriented texts	Framework of actions, Guidelines, Codes of conduct, Policy orientation	Follow-up reports	Outcome not binding	Max 20 per years
Joint opinions and tools	Declarations, Guides, Handbooks, Websites, Tools	No follow-up activities, only promotion of the materials	Outcome not binding	2010-2012 60, 2012-2014 80

Source: Adapted from Eurofound (2018: 120).

- ***Involvement of national social partners in EU-level social dialogue***

Evidence shows that the majority of national social partners is involved in policy making of relevant reforms within national reform programs, but also participates in other forms of SD, e.g., special committees or bilateral discussions (Eurofound, 2017a). Results on the quality of involvement into European SD structures are similar for 2016 and 2017, however, the perceived effectiveness and involvement in the European Semester varies across social partners from various member states. Some social partners reported a small improvement in terms of time of consultations or organization of processes, visibility and influence. While these improvements are deemed positive, social partners still remain critical towards the meaning of involvement in European Semester activities and consider this SD platform limited to information sharing (Eurofound, 2017a).

Bechter et al. (2018) offer a systematic analysis of involvement of national social partners in EU-level social dialogue structures, focusing on the European sectoral social dialogue (ESSD) committees and the effectiveness of social dialogue in ESSD committees. In the context of increasing importance of ESSD committees, their study examined the effectiveness of social dialogue in 43 sectors in which ESSD committees exist. The findings show that functioning sectoral bargaining structures in the national context and a similarity of challenges faced in the national/sectoral and the European contexts increase the likelihood of cooperation and coordination of policies within ESSD committees, and an effective implementation of ESSD outcomes in the member states (Bechter et al. 2018: 4).

- ***Topics addressed in EU-level social dialogue structures***

In order to identify which topics featured in EU-level SD discussions, a research team in which the authors of this paper were involved analysed texts and minutes of EU-level cross-sectoral and sectoral SD committee meetings between 2015 and 2017 published on the relevant EESD councils' websites. 35 topics were identified and the frequency of their coverage in the meetings has been coded using Microsoft Excel. The most important source of the data were minutes from these meetings, supplemented by analyses conducted by Eurofound and other sources. The outcome is shown in Figure 1 separately for EU-level cross-industry committees and for EU-level sectoral SD committees.

In addition, two new topics sparked the interest of EU-level social partners and the frequency of picking up these topics in the committee discussions has been increasing. The authors' analysis of the committees' minutes after 2017 shows that social partners paid increasing attention to discuss the social and employment consequences of digitalization and automatization. Since 2019, the topic of a European Minimum Wage in the context of fair minimum wages in the EU are increasingly addressed in EU-level SD structures particularly by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) upon the demand of national trade union members from CEE member states. The 2019 President elect of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen also addressed the topic of fair minimum wages when outlining the political priorities of the new European Commission, which created expectations on the side of EU-level social partners and facilitated further discussions on this topic (von der Leyen 2019).

Figure 1: Frequency of topics discussed at EU-level cross-industry SD (2015 – 2017)
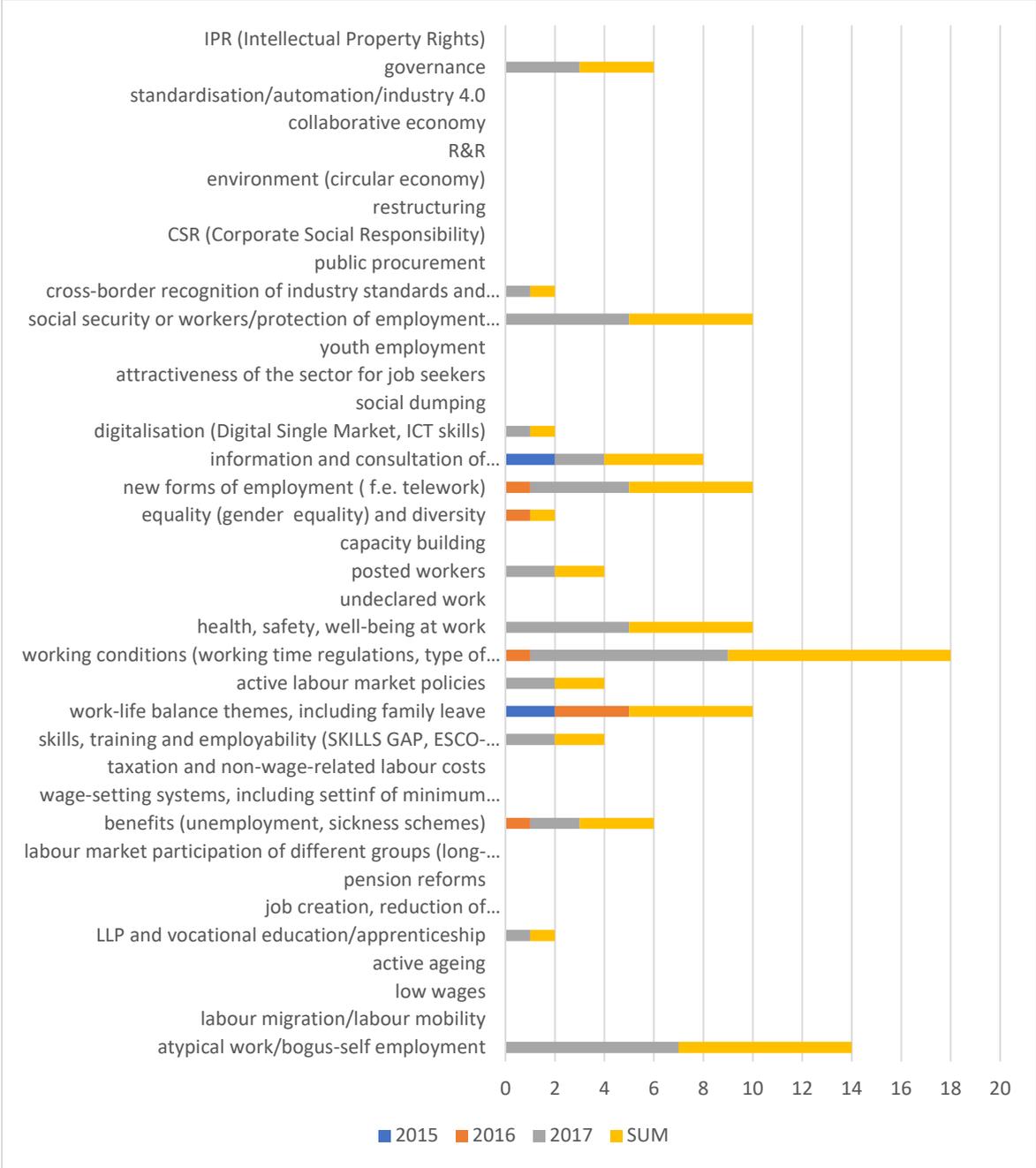
Source: authors' compilation from minutes and online sources

Figure 2: Frequency of topics discussed at EU-level sectoral SD (2015 – 2017)
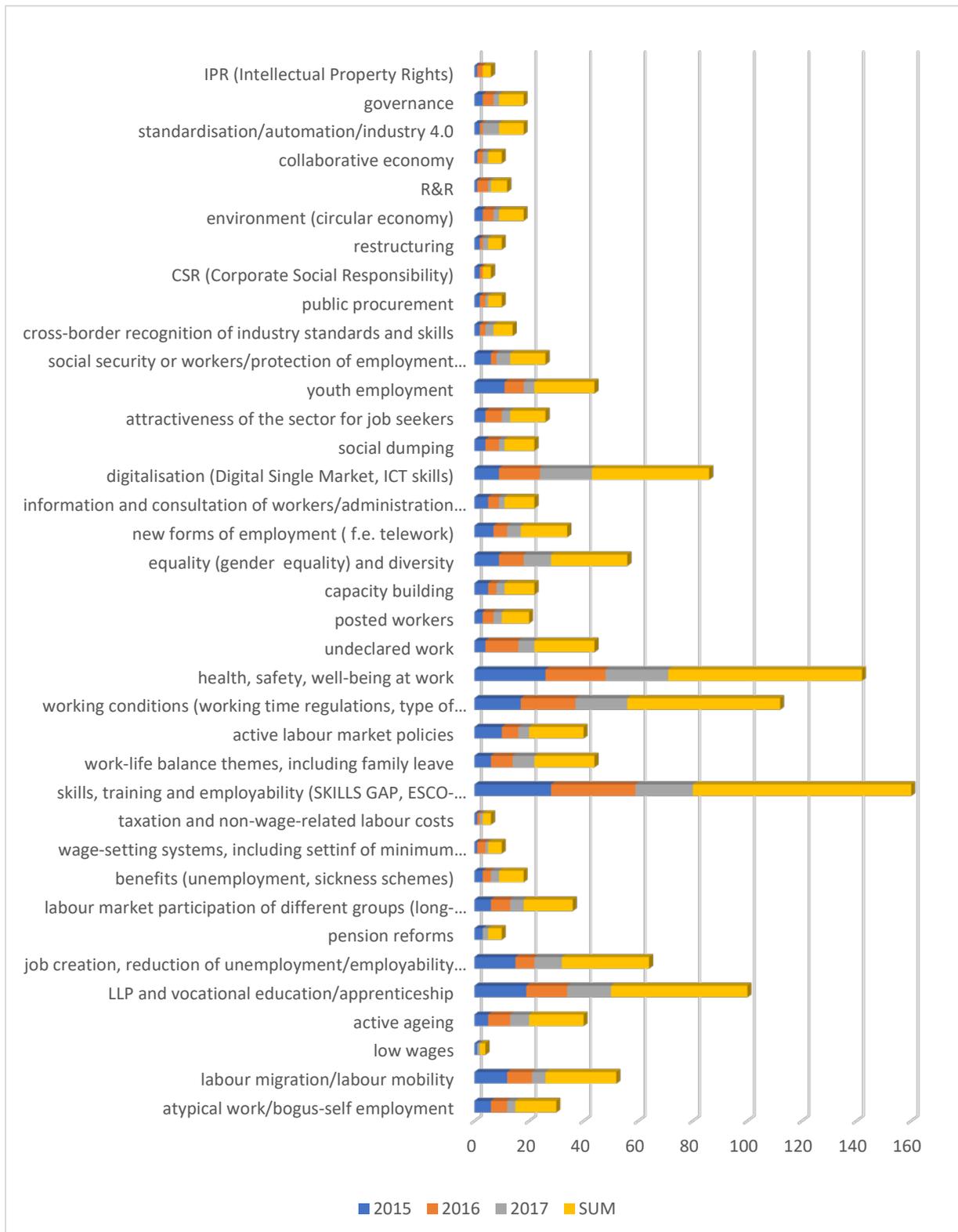
Source: Own elaboration based on Minutes of ESSD committee meetings and Eurofound (2018).

The above Figures 1 and 2 suggest that the most frequently discussed topics both in

European cross-industry and sectoral SD committees include:

- ***skills, training and employability***
- ***health, safety, well-being at work***
- ***working conditions (working time regulations, type of contracts and similar)***

In our further analysis, the category of "working conditions" is defined by various conditions including working time regulations and employment contracts.

In addition to topics that were featured in the meeting of EU-level SD committees, we provide an overview of topics that were featured in the debates of national social partners across the member states (see Figure 3). In most cases, SD at the national level evolved in the form of debate and resulted in legislative or public policy action.

Figure 3: Most frequently discussed topics in national SD
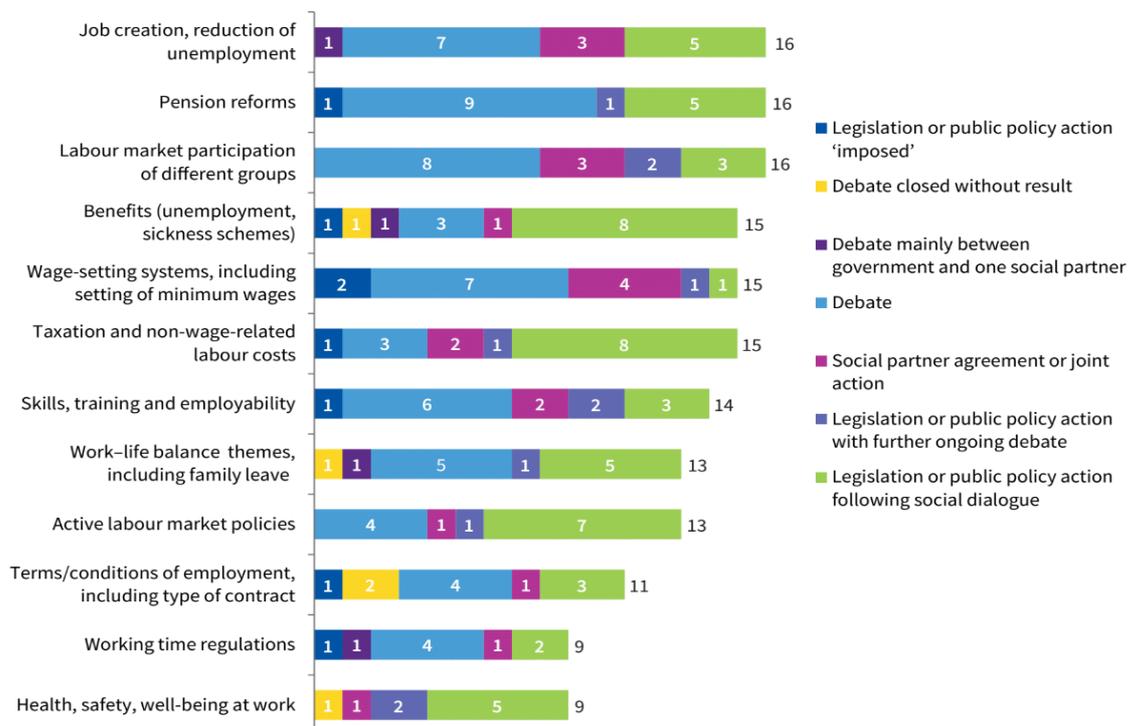
Source: Eurofound (2018: 26).

In this respect, the main concerns of such debates regarded labour market integration of different groups, job creation and unemployment reduction, and active labour market

policies. On these topics, discussions usually produced an agreement among social partners, followed by a legislative or public policy action. However, in debates over wage setting systems and minimum wages, the agreement has been limited as social partners could not agree on issues of benefits, work-live balance and health or safety at work. Yet while in most of the cases legislation or policy action have not been imposed, in some cases it has (see Figure 3).

In sum, the EU resembles a complex web of interactions between representatives of the state, employers and employees, organized in various social dialogue structures. In order to understand the functioning of SD and seeking improvements in its effectiveness at various levels and between these levels, structures and actors, the next section elaborates an analytical framework to study SD articulation and its effectiveness.

Analytical framework

We adopt a multi-level governance approach (MLG) to study the decision-making dynamics of diverse political structures of the EU (Marks 1992) and European SD (Marginson and Keune 2012). The MLG approach refers to a governance mode that aims to involve actors from different levels of a decision-making process in order to enhance the output legitimacy. While the MLG has no clear definition of the subject of its studies, is captures the processes, structures and the type of actors' engagement, assessing the legitimacy of outcomes (Curry 2016, Piattoni 2009). Therefore, in our framework, we focus particularly on (a) conceptualizing the actors and their resources, rationale and legitimacy to engage in SD; (b) conceptualizing the form of actors' interaction within SD, acknowledging a continuum of competitive and constructive interactions; (c) drawing on actors' characteristics and their interactions that may justify the likelihood of particular types of SD topics; (d) formulate expectations on the type of SD outcomes and their transposition between various SD levels, most notably the EU-level and national level; and (e) operationalize the concept of effectiveness of social dialogue articulation with suggestions on measuring this variable.

In general, actors possess different power resources to implement the outputs, making it essential to study actor´s legitimacy as well as the structure of decision-making bodies within

which actors operate. The structure of decision-making processes may be formed by "*ad hoc networks, which may include, in a rather haphazard way, legitimately constituted deliberative assemblies together with other public and private, individual and* collective actors" (Jachtenfuchs 1997), which further adds to complexity of the MLG studies. Figure 4 shows the structure of European social dialogue in a MLG perspective.

Figure 4: European social dialogue in a MLG perspective

Figure 1: ESD-EESD as multi-level governance
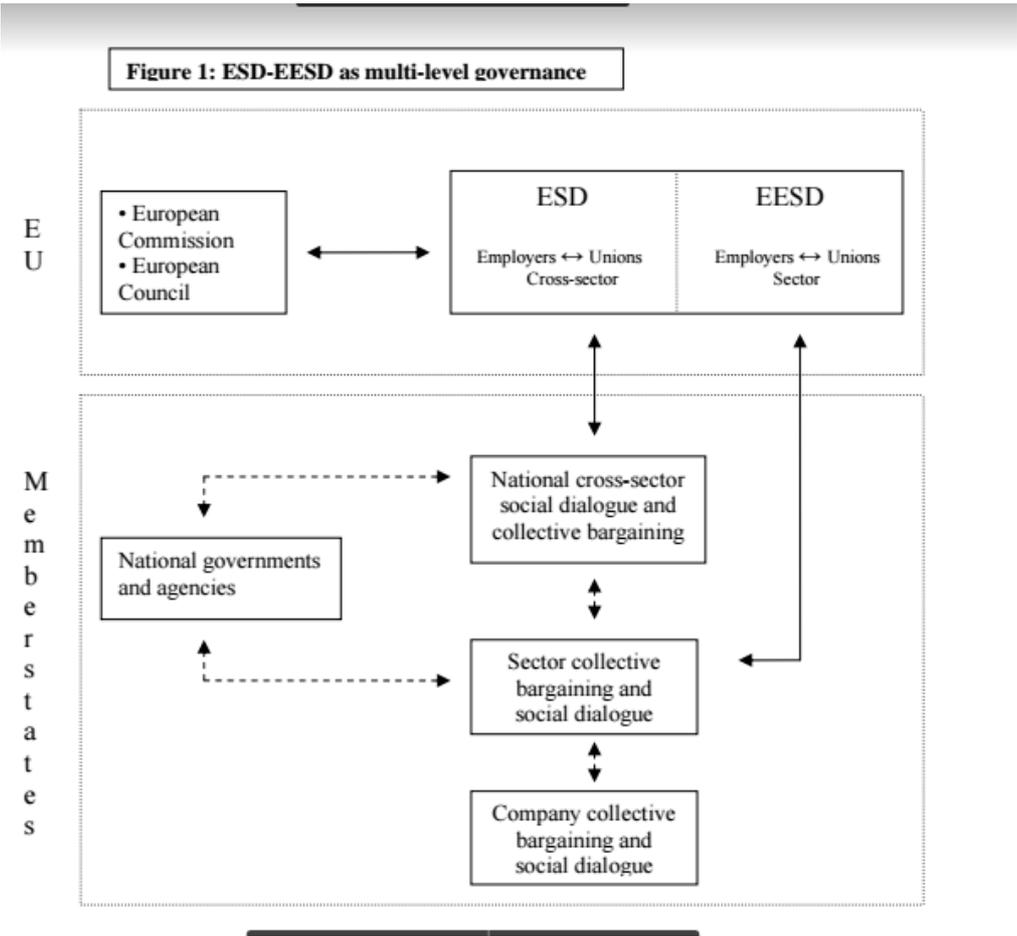
Source: Marginson and Keune (2013: 88).

This section focuses on measurable operationalization of social dialogue structures, actors, forms of interaction, intensity of social dialogue and possible SD outcomes at the EU and national levels.

In terms of the structure and actor´s autonomy, scholars distinguish between two types of structures derived from the MLG design that represent two opposite modes of actors´

involvement and policy enforcement. (Curry 2016, Marks and Hooge 2003, Skelcher 2005). Type I refers to a **rigid structure type with division of competences and pre-defined actors' legitimacy**. Type II, on the other hand, represents an **anarchical, flexible structural design with deliberate actors´ involvement** (see Figure 5). The first type is often represented by the federal system of governance with defined hierarchy, the second type could be represented by interest groups, voluntary created associations or other initiatives. While u the output of the first type has a high degree of legal enforcement, there is no legal support of the second type. In this respect, Type II is being enforced through other means.

Figure 5: Structural and relational perspectives of the MLG approach to SD articulation
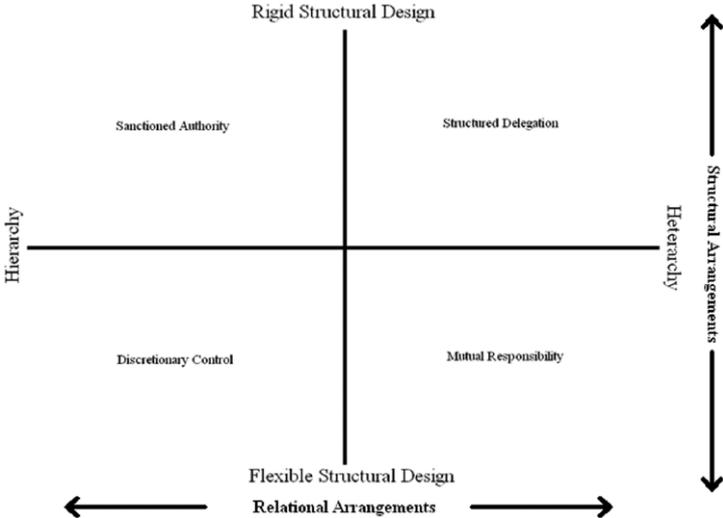
Source: Curry (2016)

In order to overcome the main obstacle of this distinction, its polarity and difficult practical application, Curry (2016) introduced a continuum of these two types, distinguishing between **structural and relational factors of the MLG structure design**. His assumption is derived from a real-life reference to interactions between voluntarily created associations (of Type II) and state organizations and political representatives (of Type I). This also applies to the case of SD structures. While state invites autonomous interest representatives (social partners) to participate in decision-making processes, the legitimacy of outcomes remains disparate. However, an existing, power asymmetry between actors is being challenged, ensuring at least partial equalization of actors´ interests.

Following Curry´s distinction of different types of MLG governance, we distinguish between *structural (implementation)* and *relational (relationship) factors* that affect the extent of actors´ involvement, their mutual relations and implementation of outcomes. Structural (implementation) factors determine an outcome of decision-making can become binding for the involved actors. In this respect, a <u>rigid structure</u> refers to legal tools used while implementing SD outcomes. In contrast, a <u>flexible structure</u> leaves the implementation of an outcome upon actors' power resources and understanding of debated issue (Curry 2016). The former is, therefore, associated with implementation of binding while the latter associate with non-binding outcomes of SD. Furthermore, the rigidity or flexibility of outcomes' implementation could be set by the actors themselves. In this scenario, implementation is either based on ad hoc decisions, or the legal setting pre-determines the process, making the structure automatically rigid (Hay 2009).

Relational factors of the MLG framework refer to the level of control that is exercised between the actors. In the hierarchical structure, actors are less independent in the decision-making and more bound by the upper level actors, while in the more autonomous structure design, actors enjoy independence in implementation of outcomes and in suggesting topics for discussions (Curry 2016).

Accordingly, derived from the MLG perspective, European SD structures are characterized by autonomous actors and flexible implementation of outcomes. This is further related to the actors´ active role in proposing the content (*input legitimacy*) of SD debates, the procedure of its adoption (*procedural legitimacy*) and form of legal enforcement (*output legitimacy*). Actors´ legitimacy in the process is defined by specific structural representativeness criteria.

However, national-level SD viewed through the lenses of MLG possesses different characteristics than EU-level SD. Social partners in most EU member states have access to political representation through tripartite committees, however, their level of involvement and outcome legitimacy differ widely between countries and regions (Eurofound 2018). Consequently, the design of SD structure at the national level, which shapes the content and extent of social partners' involvement, plays an important role in SD articulation at the European level (c.f. Bechter et al. 2018).

In addition, Marginson and Keune (2013) indicate a wider potential of the MLG approach, considering transnationalization of SD and emergence of interdependencies between actors at (multinational) company level. First, in order to reach compliance with international labour standards, multinational companies (MNCs) arrive at international framework agreements (IFAs) whose implementation at local level raises substantial challenges (Marginson and Keune 2013; Niforou 2011; Riisgaard 2005). Second, European works councils (EWCs) in some MNCs tend to negotiate transnational agreements with management that also raise questions regarding their implementation and legitimacy at the transnational company level (Marginson and Keune 2013, Müller et al. 2011). While we acknowledge the importance of the company level especially in MNCs in facilitating cross-border company-level SD, our framework focuses on the articulation between sector, national and EU-level SD structures. Therefore, we refrain from including the company level into our framework.

- ***SD actors and their legitimacy***

Actors of SD include representative social partners, interest groups, and EU-level representatives (politicians and officials). The EU-level SD as well as most of the national level SD structures apply rules on representativeness for the actors´ involvement, increasing actors´ legitimacy to participate. In EU-level tripartite and bipartite SD structures, actors are empowered to propose discussion topics and choose the form of implementation (binding or non-binding in the form of agreements, process-oriented tools or joint opinions). In this respect, involved social partners favour a form that allows for a high degree of independence at national-level implementation (see the outcome implementation at the national level (for details see Table 4, column on Output legitimacy). Moreover, at the EU level, actors may also adopt soft forms of outcome implementation such as lobbying, bargaining, campaigns, or contact activation. These forms are rather similar to the open-method of coordination applied at the EU level among its member states.

At the national level, the issue of legitimacy is often resolved at the tripartite body representation. Yet, the extent of the tripartite consultations and subsequent output

legitimacy vary widely among countries. Apart from social partners, other interest groups may enter and influence the process of bargaining, especially its output implementation.

- ***Actors' resources for engagement in social dialogue***

The involvement of actors into SD structures is conditioned by available resources and a rationale behind the involvement. Levesque and Murray (2010) distinguish between three types of resources that could be used to identify the capacity of social partners (also employers, although the authors only focus on trade unions) to engage in SD and contribute to its effectiveness:

- **institutional resources** refer to statutory and non-statutory support for activities of social partners in the form of legislative recognition of their roles and social compromises, such as support for collective bargaining and involvement in national tripartite SD after meeting representativeness criteria (c.f. Dörre et al. 2009).
- **structural resources** refer to actors' structural positions in the context in which they operate. For example, trade unions representing employees may have more strategic power (institutional resources assumed) in the case of tight labour market than during economic downturn. Along the same lines, powerful industrial employers' associations may be strategically important in national tripartite SD as well as EU-level SD thanks to a strategic role of industry in a particular economy (c. f. Weil 2005, Wright 2000). Structural resources have a direct influence on actors' motivation to engage in SD and also shape the order of particular topics important to the actors. High structural power also facilitates actors' ability to effectively implement SD outcomes.
- **organizational resources** include internal factors that facilitate or hinder the actors' involvement in SD, preference of a particular topic (possibly diverse in the context of national and EU-level SD), and capacity to implement SD outcomes. In a context of relatively weak institutional and structural resources, proactive leadership or a capable secretariat of EU-level social partner organizations could serve as the agents of change in SD articulation. Proactive leaders and a feasible organizational structure (e.g., helping to overcome barriers for involvement in EU-level SD structures such as language barriers) are necessary to foster effective SD articulation. It is the

organizational resources that affect the degree to which are social partners willing and able to adapt their strategies vis-à-vis other social partners and governments in the context of national and EU-level SD as well as reaching out to engage in novel topics of SD.

Apart from the above resources, social partners' involvement in SD may be motivated by rationales of economic efficiency and/or their own organizational and institutional legitimacy (Freeman and Medoff 1984, Marginson and Keune 2013). In sum, we assume that potential motivation of the other actor influence/shape rational preferences of social partners and type of interaction between them in SD.

- ***Interaction between actors involved in social dialogue***

The MLG approach counts upon the presence of contestation and diverse interests of social partners (e.g. Bechter et al. 2018). In this respect, for example, social partners in the metal sector are more interested in discussing industrial policy within EU-level SD structures than social partners in sectors less exposed to globalized markets. Additionally, the MLG approach deals with the likelihood (probability) of diverse interests of the same actors in the national and the EU contexts, having implications for effectiveness of SD articulation and implementation of SD outcomes. At the same time, uncertainty of outcomes is an inherent feature of actors' interactions in the MLG approach. To capture various forms of interaction between social partners in SD, we distinguish between the following types (see also Table 3):

Interaction in form of *control* entails economic or legal power of an actor to make decisions and impose these on others (Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis 1997: 57) as, for example, in the case of legally binding decision of a national parliament or EU Parliament (or Council). The final decision could be based on the social dialogue outcome, or in contrary, it could stem from undesired decision that facilitated some type of action of the social

Table 3 Forms of interactions and power relations in SD articulation

Social interaction	Form of interdependency	Power relations	Actors	Outcome legal legitimacy	Channel of the SD articulation
Control	Vertical	Asymmetry	EU policy bodies and ESD/ESSD	Legally binding	Top-down (or mixed)

			participants, national level governments and national level SP	(high)	
Competition	Horizontal	Equalized, other soft tools of empowering important	ESD/ESSD participants, in general any form of bilateral social dialogue, interest groups other than SP	If there is outcome, it would have low legitimacy (e.g. based on lobbying)	Bottom-up
Shared values	Vertical/horizontal	Equalized	ESD/ESSD common outcome, EC implementation	High outcome legitimacy at the EU level (e.g. through autonomous implementation, or EC involvement)	Bottom-up
Interactive bargaining	Vertical/horizontal	Distance diminished, equalized	Collective bargaining (not present at the EU level)	Legally binding (high)	Bottom-up/mixed

Source: own elaboration

partners. In this case, the power-relation is characterized by the dependence of social partners on political decisions, implying high degree of power asymmetry towards decision-making bodies. At the same time, it remains the opportunity for social partners to influence an outcome and thereby increase the visibility of their impact. In the case of the other interest groups, the power asymmetry is even more explicit.

The second form of interaction is *competition*, entailing rivalry between actors that strive for the same resources (Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis 1997: 56). Competitive interaction is typical for actors at the same hierarchical level, or among those who are not dependent on each other. Therefore, it is also relevant for social partners at the EU and national/sectoral levels. While this form of social interaction could result in identification of the most efficient solution, actors may lack legal power to implement the outcome. In this case, the least powerful forms of implementation of the ESD and ESSD are (often)/could be applied, such as joint opinions and tools. A degree of influence, then, depends on other power resources such as social capital (in form of lobbying), financial resources, (campaigns) or organizational resources (ability to protest).

Cooperation based on shared values, the third social interaction form, develops on the basis of a congruent set of preferences between involved actors (Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis 1997: 57). In this case, actors share particular interests and values, enabling them to identify common agenda. Under the ESD and ESSD setting, this could serve

as a powerful tool to attain set goals and push for implementation by the EU legislative bodies. At the same time, given the possible difficulty in finding a compromise, joint recommendations in the form of Agreements at the EU level remain rare. Nevertheless, the collective issues (e.g. health and safety) fall under this form of interaction, providing the field in which social partners could cooperate together.

The final form of social interaction is *interactive bargaining*, mediating consultations between actors with different interests (Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis 1997: 58). At the EU level, it could refer to a constructive SD among EU representatives and social partners. This form of interaction decreases power asymmetry between the actors, in some cases, making existing power asymmetries irrelevant. In contrast to competitive interaction, this form results in an agreement accompanied by commitment to effectively implement the solution. Such an outcome does not require external enforcement and can be directly implemented.

- ***Channels of SD articulation***

Bottom-up articulation refers to the situation when the input suggestion comes from lower level to higher, e.g. from the national representatives to the EU-level representatives, or from sectorial to cross-sectorial level. It also assumes that actors act independently while suggesting topics for discussions. *Top-down* articulation expects that the impulse for discussion is created by a higher-level institution that demands the outcome implementation at lower level. *Mixed* articulation combines both approaches, proposing the implementation of bottom-up articulation through top-down processes.

- ***Actor involvement***

The MLG structure implies joint responsibility of the involved actors as, for example, in the European social dialogue design. This requires a high degree of actors´ involvement in order to achieve desired outcome, given the actors´ autonomy and flexibility of the structures. As described, in most of the cases, actors´ involvement at the EU level includes information

exchange and consultation, the least intensive forms of the social dialogue (Figure 5), and partially also negotiations with the EC.

Figure 5 Intensity of social dialogue
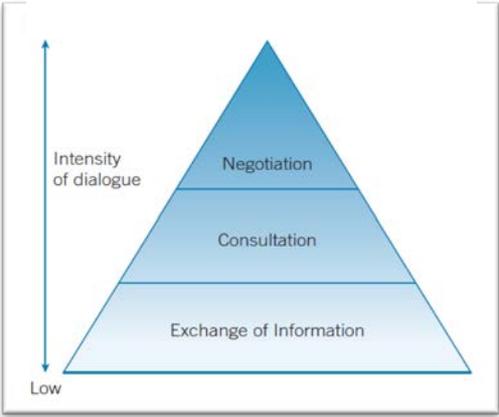
Source: Ishikawa (2003)

Therefore, our analytical framework for studying SD articulation at the EU level requires to look at specific forms of involvement, including level of an intensity of social partners´ participation in social dialogue (see Table 4).

Table 4 Intensity of social dialogue in relation to actors' involvement

Intensity of social dialogue	Form of involvement (on voluntary basis)	Degree of involvement
Information exchange	Draft documents receiving Meeting participation	Low
Consultation	Delivering contribution Coalition building	Medium
Negotiation	Negotiation Outcome suggestion (form and content) Outcome implementation (enforcement, translation to national legislation, translation to practices at the national level) (high degree of involvement)	High
Co-organisation	Creating joint permanent organisations Agreements on steering and funding of these organisations	Very high

- ***Barriers to involvement***

Actors could encounter also barriers to participate in SD at the EU and national level (see Table 5). Power resources of social partners in the EU-level SD are limited by regulations of

the functioning of SD committees. These define the structural power of social partners. While SD in general and the involvement of social partners is promoted, Council members could use their powers and neglect the implementation of social partners´ suggestion. In this respect, along with the measurable incidence of actors´ involvement, the actual degree of influence is contested because it is a matter of actors' subjective assessment.

Table 5 Barriers of actors' involvement to effective social dialogue articulation

Type	EU level	National/sector level
Personal	Language barrier	
Personal/organizational	Capacity constraint (lack of personal capacities, lack of time to participate in meetings)	Capacity constraint (lack of personal capacities, lack of the time to participate on the meetings)
Organizational	Financial resources (travel, membership fees)	
Procedural (MLG design)	Procedure transparency	Procedure transparency
Procedural (MLG design)	Barriers of entry (representativeness constraint, relevant especially for the interest groups)	Barriers of entry (representativeness constraint, relevant especially for the interest groups)

The MLG approach accounts for both bottom up and top down SD articulation between national and the EU level. While the legitimacy of actors´ involvement on both levels remains enhanced, the impact of their actions at the EU level could remain limited or even invisible at the national or sectoral level. This depends on level of involvement, the type of the output agreed at the EU level, and consequent transposition into the EU legislative processes. In terms of implementation of EU-level SD outcomes, binding Directives are likely to serve as an additional institutional resource for national social partners in their domestic SD structures. However, while European social partners attain autonomy through taking responsibility for implementing the agreements they conclude, this increases their dependence on preferences of their members – national affiliates. For instance, national social partners involved in EU-level SD who are reluctant to implement outcomes may hinder implementation of these outcomes (Marginson and Keune 2012, Bechter et al. 2018).

- ***Effectiveness of social dialogue and its articulation***

Assessing and measuring the effectiveness of social dialogue and its articulation (interaction between different levels of SD) is a challenging task. First of all, it is important to distinguish between

- *effectiveness of SD*
- *effectiveness of SD articulation*

While effectiveness of SD refers to credibility and relevance of social dialogue, effectiveness of SD articulation refers to the ability of social partners from various levels to interact and transpose outcomes reached at one level to another levels. The European Commission (2010, 1998) defines effectiveness of ESSD in terms of effective representation of social partners engaging in ESSD, and effective participation conditioned by participants´ capacity to negotiate outcomes. In this respect, this definition resembles the previously mentioned structural design of SD, ranging between a flexible and a rigid structure. The term 'effective' also appears in the context of 'effective' implementation and 'effective' impact, referring to the capacity of national actors to implement ESSD outcomes and enhance social dialogue at the national level, especially in the new member states (Bechter et al. 2018: 18, European Commission 2010: 10).

However, most of the actors have different perceptions on what constitutes effective social dialogue. Therefore, previous studies offer analytical tools to evaluate effectiveness. According to the European Commission, effective social dialogue relates to effective representation and effective participation, including the ability of social partners to effectively respond to EC policies and initiatives (European commission 1998, 2010, Bechter et al. 2018). In addition, effectiveness also relates to effective implementation of SD outcomes and positive impact on policy making at national or sectorial level (European Commission 2010).

Moreover, Bechter et al. (2018) remark that SD participants often seek effective ways to organise the SD meetings and work. Effectiveness of SD increases if, for example, participants receive relevant information on time, with well-structured agenda and easy access to documents.

Objective assessment of SD effectiveness may be derived from the existing literature. Kenworthy and Kittel (2003) evaluate the functioning of SD, often related to effective SD, along 4 dimensions listed below. In addition to the original listing of dimensions, we add our

reflections on how are particular dimensions related to measuring SD effectiveness in our analysis:

(a) associational structure and power of social partners participating in social dialogue (representativeness criteria, structure/fragmentation of involved social partners)

(b) wage setting arrangements that result from the interaction of participating partners (ability of SD to generate outcome)

(c) participation in public policy – access of participating partners to policy making e.g. through bipartite and/or tripartite consultations (in our view, this is a key measure of effective SD; measuring this ability can be derived from the number of outcomes of SD that produced policy impact, as well as the subjective association of social partners on SD's policy influence.)

(d) firm-level employee representation – recognition of firm-level employee representatives by employers and their involvement in interaction (most often company-level collective bargaining), yielding a certain form of outcome (most often a binding outcome in form of a collective agreement)

Finally, the existing literature suggests that social partners' involvement in EU-level social dialogue structures, including effective SD articulation between the EU-level and the national level, is highly dependent on the effective operationalization of SD at the national level. Even in countries with well-established institutional set-up for SD, there is a room for improving the efficiency of SD and its articulation through providing social partners with more time for preparations, consultation, and feedback.

While participation of social partners in the European Semester could be considered relatively different from social partners' participation in other EU-level SD structures and other forms of participation with economic and social-policy impact, there is a strong link in terms of *practice* and *outcomes* in all types of SD. Therefore, we expect that the more effective SD and its implementation at national level is, the more effective is the involvement of social partners in European Semester consultations and other EU-level SD forums. Nevertheless, earlier literature found that the level, quality, impact and effectiveness of involvement of social partners in the European Semester varies considerably

between (Eurofound 2017a and EMCO 2016). Furthermore, the findings indicate that an appropriate institutional space and framework is generally conducive to effective social dialogue in the context of the European Semester. Timing is important as well: successful social dialogue cannot be built overnight (EMCO 2016).

In sum, our assessment of effective SD analytically distinguishes effectiveness of SD as such and effectiveness of SD articulation. While we do not introduce strict measurements for each type of effectiveness, we relate the measurement of effective SD to its ability to produce binding or non-binding outcomes according to preferences of involved actors. In turn, we refer to effectiveness of SD articulation in cases where SD outcomes achieved at one level can successfully be implemented into the debates or legislative frameworks derived from the practice of SD at other levels.

Methodological approach

The methodological approach feasible for analysing the complex relations within SD in the EU, their articulation and effectiveness thereof, consists of a mix of research methods combining qualitative and quantitative research. It builds on existing knowledge and data but also allows for collection of new evidence to examine SD articulation and the factors determining its effectiveness. Four methodological tools are feasible for data collection and analysis: an EU-wide survey among national social partners, interviews with EU-level, national and sector-level social partners involved in SD respective SD structures, and a network analytical perspective on SD articulation.

- *Survey*

An empirical assessment of experiences, opinions and perceptions about the functioning and articulation of SD is best based on a survey among national social partners involved in national-level SD in the EU27. In most EU member states national SD is tripartite, involving employers' representatives, trade unions and government representatives. Data collection via a survey involves preparation of a checklist for survey questions, setting up the survey questionnaire and compiling a dataset of respondents that includes participants in ESD and

ESSD committees, government or Commission representatives, participants in national tripartite or bipartite social dialogue, among others. Data collected via the survey may be used to conduct a comparative analysis of social partners' involvement in EU-level SD structures, their perceptions as well as objective measurements of the effectiveness of SD articulation, focusing mostly on articulation between the national and the EU level (both top-down and bottom-up articulation).

Reflecting the above analytical categories and their operationalization, the survey questions are likely to embrace on the following issues:
- involvement of national social partners in EU-level social dialogue structures
- views of national social partners on effectiveness of social dialogue articulation from the procedural point of view (relationships and interactions within SD structures)
- views of national social partners on effectiveness of social dialogue articulation from the point of view of outcomes (binding vs. non-binding outcomes both at the EU-level and national level)
- effectiveness of social dialogue articulation from a network-analytical perspective

- ***Interviews***

Building on the survey results, data collection and analysis may be further enriched and supplemented with information collected via semi-structured interviews. The purpose of these interviews is to
(a) zoom in on those areas where survey results were incomplete or, by contrast, lead to unexpected or new revelations
(b) focus on national social partners' experience with and opinions on social dialogue articulation mainly in the national context (e.g., functioning of national SD structures, perceived effectiveness of their processes and outcomes).

The value of data collected from in-depth interviews lies in their focus on the role of trust, informal networks, political or business linkages and other factors that the respondents find relevant to shape the context, practice and outcomes of national-level SD. The first group of respondents includes EU-level social partners and other stakeholders including experts. The

second group of interview respondents includes national social partner representatives, but also national policy-makers and relevant experts. In addition to analysis of SD articulation at the national level, sectoral case studies are feasible in various studied countries in different clusters of industrial relations (see Table 1 above). The same questionnaire and analytical tools may be used for the sectoral studies as for the study of SD articulation in a national context.

- ***Network analysis***

The final element in our methodological approach to understanding the effectiveness of SD and its articulation is to approach it as networks of interactions between social dialogue actors, using suitable analytical tools and methods from social-scientific network analysis. Network analysis is the study of relations between entities, the networks these relations form and how these relations and networks relate to effects at the level of entities. Network analysis is often seen as a parallel line of inquiry to the more cross-comparative analytical approaches that social scientists perhaps are more accustomed to: rather than looking at properties of individual entities (may they be individuals, organisations, countries, concepts, objects etc.) and statistically examining how certain attributes of entities are linked to the state and evolution of other attributes, network analysis look at the different kinds of would-be linkages and properties thereof that bind the entities together into systemic wholes. In the context of labor markets, Granovetter's (1974) famous study is a classic example of how a relational perspective can yield new insights, and lead to the formulation of novel theory, that conventional cross-comparative analysis cannot provide: getting a job is not as much related to *what* you know, but rather *who* you know.

Network analysis is not a singular method, but comprises a broad set of measures and methods, capturing different structural properties of entities (aka "actors" or "nodes"), subsets of actors, or the network as a whole. As with statistical methods and metrics, the various network-analytical measures have different interpretations/meanings depending, of course, on the studied dataset: a certain value of betweenness centrality means different things in different contexts, just as a certain value of a standard deviation does. Whereas the classical cross-comparative statistical methods often assume independence between observations, network analysis is explicitly concerned with inter-dependencies between

entities. Network analysts thus typically need full population data (rather than sampled data): this can either be obtained by clearly specifying the set of entities/actors included in the study, or through snowball gathering of data from a certain set of seed entities.

The underlying motivation for conducting a network analysis is that structures matter: i.e. that the relationships that exist (and that do not exist) between actors could be important for understanding the evolution, possibilities, constraints, opportunities etc. of actors. This does not in any way rule out the importance of the attributes of individual actors to explain outcomes; rather, when applicable, network-analytical approaches are typically most fruitful when combined with more cross-comparative approaches (whether qualitative or quantitative).

Following the multi-level governance framework of Keune and Marginson (2013: 483), the network-analytical component allows observing and mapping the existence of different kinds of relations among the various organizations at the various governance levels involved in social dialogue. As we are dealing with a well-defined system boundary that specifies the organizations to be studied, we intend to add a relational component to the surveys and/or interviews to be conducted conduct with [the actors included – specify whether at different MLG levels, and/or within-countries etc.; we need to specify exactly what networks we intend to capture; both between whom and what more precisely]. Relations will either be collected by providing each organization with a comprehensive list of viable alters (i.e. all participants in the study) or through a so-called name generator (e.g. Bidart and Charbonneau 2011) where the respondents freely add their respective alters.

As with all social relations, relations between organizations come in many varieties, types and intensities. Following the four broad types of social interactions between SD actors outlined above, the collection of relational data encompasses several types of interactions: control, competition, cooperation and bargaining. Whereas we expect that relations of control and bargaining should follow latent power-relations (see Keune and Marginson 2013: 483), we will supplement these four relational types with other classical inter-organizational relations such as resource sharing, perceptions of prominence/influence, obtaining information, antagonism etc. When applicable, we also measure such relations beyond the binary nature of simple ties, but also apply Likert-scale ordinal measures to capture the intensity and degree of such relations.

By collecting multiple types of relations for each of the partners in our study, we allow for multilayer/multiplex network approaches, providing a much richer foundation for mapping, and possibly explaining, the complexities and would-be mechanisms that drive outcomes in the particular multi-level governance structure that we are analysing. Given a particular network, there are a plethora of metrics that can be extracted, reflecting different aspects of the structural properties for each of the organisations in the network. For instance, whereas a centrality analysis of the inter-organisational network would provide (various) metrics of the centrality of an organisation, could such metrics be coupled with performance-type indicators of the organisations? A blockmodel/role-analysis would result in subsets of organisations that share similar roles in the network as a whole: apart from demonstrating whether the network of interactions constitute a core-periphery structure, a transitive structure, a community structure etc., the placement of individual organisations within such structures (e.g. is an organisation a core or a periphery in the network) could also be linked to more attributional (including qualitative) assessments of organisations. Such analyses are typically conducted using multilayer network data, i.e. exactly what we aim to collect in our surveys/interviews.

- ***Summary***

The multi-method analysis of SD allows embracing the diversity in social dialogue and industrial relations' traditions that exists in Europe. Data collection thus embraces a survey conducted in the EU27 covering social dialogue at the EU, national and sub-national levels, across and within sectors. The findings of the survey are completed via a network analysis of collected data, which emphasises the structure of the relations between the actors involved in SD. In-depth analysis and case-specific research conducted through semi-structured interviews and case studies is a feasible supplement of the quantitative research methods.

Conclusions

The presented analytical framework serves as a guideline for an empirical analysis of SD, its articulation and effectiveness. The starting point is a multi-level governance approach to SD articulation, connecting various SD levels, actors, channels and forms of their interaction.

The framework developed here embraces various dimensions of this multi-level governance approach, focusing on actors and their resources, on the forms/type/depth of their interaction as well as the type of outcomes. These operationalizations in turn feed a qualitative approach to measuring the effectiveness of SD articulation as a distinct concept from effectiveness of SD as a process. In the next step, the methodology for implementing the above framework is elaborated.

While a well-functioning social dialogue is seen as a key mechanism for securing the goals of the European Pillar of Social rights, EU-level social partners agree that there is no single blueprint for social dialogue (Eurofound 2019). The system of social dialogue in the EU embraces various actors, levels and structures, respecting common EU-wide goals as well as national diversities. The key message about improving the functioning and effectiveness of social dialogue at both the national and the EU level suggest that '...*social dialogue requires social partners that are strong, representative, autonomous, mandated and equipped with the capacities needed. Social partners also need to dispose of the institutional settings allowing for their dialogue to take place and to be effective.*' (EU cross-industry social partners Joint Declaration, in Eurofound 2019:3).

 The contribution of research endeavours to support the above goal is proposing analytical guidelines that help understanding the nuances of the current functioning and effectiveness of social dialogue and its articulation. Therefore, this paper developed a conceptual and analytical framework to guide empirical research on social dialogue articulation and its effectiveness. It also presented a feasible research methodology that accounts for the high level of diversity in the EU member states' industrial relations and social dialogue practices and traditions.

The fundamental approach developed here builds on the multi-level governance perspective on social dialogue, thereby accounting for a growing involvement of non-state actors in policy-making (as the EU lacks an executive government body), new supra-national governance structures, dynamically changing preferences of national and sectoral actors, power relations and the substantial diversity in industrial relations and governance frameworks across the EU (Marginson and Keune 2012). Together, these factors imply strong interdependencies between different actors involved and therefore justify the use of multi-

level governance approach in this project.

Particular attention was devoted to conceptualizing

- the actors and their resources, rationale and legitimacy to engage in SD;
- the form of actors' interaction within SD, acknowledging a continuum of competitive and constructive interactions;
- a justification of a likelihood for preferring particular types of topics in social dialogue
- expectations on the type of outcomes and their transposition between various levels of social dialogue, most notably the EU-level and national level;
- effectiveness of social dialogue and its articulation with suggestions on operationalizing and measuring them empirically.

While effectiveness of SD refers to credibility and relevance of social dialogue, effectiveness of SD articulation refers to the ability of social partners from various levels to interact and transpose outcomes reached at one level to another levels. Nevertheless, evidence shows that most actors have different perceptions on what constitutes effective social dialogue. According to the European Commission, effective social dialogue relates to effective representation and effective participation, including the ability of social partners to effectively respond to EC policies and initiatives (European commission 1998, 2010, Bechter et al. 2018). In addition, effectiveness also relates to effective implementation of SD outcomes and positive impact on policy making at national or sectorial level (European Commission 2010). In turn, we have proposed that effective SD articulation between the EU-level and the national level, is highly dependent on the effective operationalization of social dialogue at the national level. Even in countries with well-established institutional set-up for social dialogue, there is a room for improving the efficiency of SD and its articulation through more space for social partners to prepare, consult, and discuss their approaches to particular social dialogue topics. We expect that the more effective social dialogue and its implementation at national level is, the more effective is the involvement of social partners in EU-level social dialogue structures including the European Semester.

The proposed assessment of effectiveness analytically distinguishes effectiveness of social dialogue as such and effectiveness of social dialogue articulation. While we do not introduce strict measurement suggestions for both types of effectiveness, we leave empirical

measurement of effective social dialogue to its ability to produce binding or non-binding outcomes according to preferences of involved actors. In turn, we operationalize effectiveness of social dialogue *articulation* as evidence on cases where social dialogue outcomes achieved at one level can successfully be implemented into the debates or legislative frameworks derived from the practice of social dialogue at other levels.

The conceptual and analytical framework developed in this paper will be used for an empirical study of social dialogue and its articulation in a diversity of actors' structures, institutional resources, practices and culture of dialogue and the legitimacy assigned to social dialogue and participating actors. The already existing evidence, presented in this paper, suggest that one of the preconditions for effective social dialogue is a shared perspective of involved actors on the topics that social dialogue should address. While our analysis has shown that the most frequently discussed topics in European cross-industry and European sectoral social dialogue committees during 2015 - 2017 included (a) skills, training and employability, (b) health, safety, well-being at work and (c) working conditions (working time regulations, type of contracts and similar), the effectiveness of social dialogue and the articulation of these topics between EU-level and national-level social dialogue structures remains to be empirically verified.

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Appendix: EU-level sectoral social dialogue committees and participating social partners

Sector	Social partners	
	Trade unions	**Employers' organisations**
Agriculture	European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions (EFFAT)	Employers' Group of Agricultural Organisations in the EC (COPA-COGECA)
Audiovisual	EURO-MEI - UNI-Europa Media - Entertainment & Arts	Association of Commercial Television in Europe (ACT)
	International Federation of Musicians (FIM)	Association of European Radios (AER)
	International Federation of Actors (FIA)	European Coordination of Independent Producers (CEPI)
	European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)	European Broadcasting Union (EBU)
		International Federation of Film Producers' Associations (FIAPF)
Banking	UNI Europa	European Banking Federation - Banking Committee for European Social Affairs (EBF- BCESA)
		European Savings Banks Group (ESBG)
		European Association of Co-operative Banks (EACB)
Central government administrations	Trade Unions' National and European Administration Delegation (TUNED) ((European Public Services Union (EPSU), European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions (CESI)))	European Public Administration Employers (EUPAE)
Chemical industry	IndustriAll European Trade Union	European Chemical Employers Group (ECEG)
Civil aviation	European Cockpit Association (ECA)	European Regions Airline Association (ERA)
	European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)	International Air Carrier Association (AIRE)
	ATCEUC – Air Traffic Controllers European Union Coordination	Airport Services Association (ASA)
		Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO)
Commerce	UNI Europa	EuroCommerce
Construction	European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW)	European Construction Industry Federation (FIEC)
Contract catering	European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions	European Federation of Contract Catering Organisations
Education	ETUCE - European Trade Union Committee for Education	EFEE - European Federation of Education Employers
Electricity	IndustriAll European Trade Union	Union of the Electricity Industry (EURELECTRIC)
	European federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)	
Extractive industries	IndustriAll European Trade Union	European Association of Mining Industries (Euromines)
		European Association for Coal and Lignite (EURACOAL)
		European Industrial Minerals Association (IMA Europe)
		UEPG - European Aggregates Association
		APEP - European Association of Potash Producers
Food and drink industry	European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions - EFFAT	FoodDrinkEurope
Footwear	IndustriAll European Trade Union	European Confederation of the Footwear Industry (CEC)

Sector	Social partners	
	Trade unions	**Employers' organisations**
Furniture	European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW)	Federation of European Furniture Manufacturers (UEA)
		European Furniture Industries Confederation (EFIC)
Gas	IndustriAll European Trade Union	The European Union of the Natural Gas Industry
	European federation of Public Service Unions	
Graphical industry	UNI Europa Graphical & Packaging	Intergraf – European Federation for Print and Digital Communication
Hospitals and healthcare	European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)	European Hospital and Healthcare Employers Association (HOSPEEM)
Hotels, restaurants and catering	European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions	Hotels, Restaurants and Cafe's in Europe
Industrial cleaning	UNI Europa	European Federation of Cleaning Industries (EFCI)
Inland waterways	European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)	European Barge Union (EBU)
		European Skippers' Organisation (ESO)
Insurance	UNI Europa	The European Insurance & Reinsurance Federation (Insurance Europe)
		The European Federation of Insurance Intermediaries (BIPAR)
		Association of Mutual Insurers & Insurance Cooperatives in Europe (AMICE)
Live performance	European Arts and Entertainment Alliance (EAEA)	Performing Arts Employers' Associations League Europe (Pearle*)
	EURO-MEI - UNI-Europa performance and media branch	
	International Federation of Musicians (FIM)	
	International Federation of Actors (FIA)	
Local and regional governments	European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)	The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)
Maritime transport	European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)	European Community Ship Owners' Associations (ECSA)
Metal industry	IndustriAll European Trade Union	Council of European Employers of the Metal, Engineering and Technology-Based Industries (CEEMET)
Paper industry	IndustriAll European Trade Union	Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI)
Personal services/Hairdressing	UNI Europa (Hair & beauty)	European Confederation of Hairdressing employers' organisations (Coiffure EU)
Ports	European Transport Worker's Federation (ETF)	Federation of European Private Port Operators (FEPORT)
	International Dockworkers Council (IDC)	European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO)
Postal services	UNI Europa	PostEurop
Private security	UNI Europa	European Confederation of Security Services (CoESS)
Professional football	International Organisation of Professional Football Players' Associations (FIFPro)	European Professional Football Leagues (EPFL)
		European Club Association (ECA)
Railways	European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)	Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER)
		European Rail Infrastructure Managers (EIM)

Sector	Social partners	
	Trade unions	**Employers' organisations**
Road transport	European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)	International Road Transport Union (IRU)
	Urban Public Transport (ETF)	International organisation for public transport authorities & operators (UITP)
Sea fisheries	European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)	Association of national organisations of fishing enterprises in the EU (Europêche)
		Fisheries section of COGECA - General Confederation of Agricultural Cooperatives in the European Union
Shipbuilding	IndustriAll European Trade Union	European Ships & Maritime Equipment Association (SEA Europe)
Steel	IndustriAll European Trade Union	European Steel Association (EUROFER)
Sugar	European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions	European Committee of Sugar Manufacturers
Training and leather	IndustriAll European Trade Union	Confederation of National Associations of Tanners & Dressers of the European Community (COTANCE)
Telecommunications	UNI Europa	The European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association (ETNO)
Temporary agency work	UNI Europa	World Employment Confederation-Europe
Textile and clothing	IndustriAll European Trade Union	The European Apparel and Textile Confederation (EURATEX)
Woodworking	European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW)	European Confederation of woodworking industries (CEO-Bois)

Source: European Commission website, websites of particular ESSD committees, state as of June 2018.