



# Enhancing Effectiveness of Social Dialogue Articulation in Europe (EESDA)

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# Status update on interviews

- EU-level interviews (8/10)
- National level interviews:
  - Ireland (1/10) – Mandate, 3 more planned (ICTU, SIPTU, IBEC)
  - France (1/10) – FO, 2 more planned (U2P, MEDEF), others are sent reminders (at least two times)
- Sectorial level interviews for Ireland and France
  - Being planned (esp. health and construction)

## EU-level interviews

# Form of **interactions** between actors and the **intensity** of Social Dialogue

- This commission has substantially more involvement in the social dialogue
  - There have been new forms of involvement, for example, formal and informal meetings, consultations and frequent conferences on topics that are in discussion
  - Capacity building is further supported by the European Commission
- Work program is the common tool for defining the important issues
- Many national issues are brought to the discussion table through
  - Regular meetings with members and
  - Help of digital communication tools
- These can become a part of topics that are later discussed with other social partners.
- Issues like digitalization for several organizations have been the center of discussion.

- Different types of outputs are considered relevant

For some organizations the most relevant output is type of a binding agreement that would create or revise a directive. However other organizations point out that change can be caused also by non-binding outputs, a guidance or recommendation for national organizations and governments for dealing with issues.

- Coalition building

Employer organizations stated that they work with other social partners commonly. They admit that there is a stronger effect of reaching their goals when all parties agree on how the issue must be treated. There are employer organizations that work closely also with worker unions, therefore making their point stronger.

- Positive change in the form of interaction

With the incentives of the last commission there have been increase of interactions and the pace of meetings. Informal ties have grown stronger causing better personal relationships and negotiation process, understanding the person behind the opponent argument.

- Topics of the EU-level Social Dialogue structures are relevant for all

The topics named in the questionnaire are relevant for all organizations participating in the interviews, however it the priorities might differ.

- Discussions tend to be constructive in the EU level

Social dialogue in the European level supports less biased and better prioritized discussion. This points out the importance of equal representation across memberstates and accessibility of bringing national issues in the international dialogue. Some organizations acknowledge that, because of the lack of representation, importance might fall on issues common by countries where representation is strong. However, those issues tend to be common with in most memberstates.

# Assessment of effectiveness

- They consider organization's work successful if it is heard

Value the quality of the work done, not only the level of binding effect or quantity of it.

- Range of the effect in national level

Seeing how many agreements are transposed to national level, however needs to be considered that sometimes countries struggle to apply certain agreements, because of the difference in system.

- Basis of effective social dialogue is capacity building

Increasing resources membership and activity of social partners in the national level. With new ways of creating stronger voice and productivity of communication.

- Following up on the actions taken in the national level is difficult

As there is no automatic measurement system, especially for non-binding agreements or recommendations

- In general it is agreed that there should be ways of assesment measure

# Transposition of outcomes between EU-level and national level

- Top – down

It can be seen that more commonly the employer organizations will have a top-down interaction, when decisions and discussion brought up by the European Commission's work is then transposed to the national organizations.

- Bottom – up

More commonly for workers organizations the voice of the worker is brought up to the European trade union organizations that can discuss the issues with other social partners.

- Both

It is common for organizations to discuss and agree on common opinion internally, before bringing it to the European level. Only issues that are agreed on commonly are considered to represent the organization.

# Barriers to actors' involvement

- Lack of representation in several Eastern-European countries

Low levels of support or sometimes no representatives of trade unions and other organizations lowers the chance of bringing national issues of these countries to the European level.

- Some tools are more important than others

The importance sometimes falls on the meaning of the agreement. In case the agreement is non-binding there are no responsible organizations, the implementation action is not obligatory and becomes unsuccessful.

## National interviews – France

# Involvement in EU SD structures

- Participation in the SD committee
- Attended the ad hoc negotiation group on the elaboration of 2019-2021 autonomous WP
- Main social policies remain at the national level. EU and national social dialogue should not cover the same topics. Wages, working time, employment at the core of the work relationship are negotiated and regulated at the national level
- Main principles:
  - Developing new rights and protections at the European level, anticipating important trends and their consequences for workers such as digitalization.
- Main topics : equal treatment, health at work, gender equality, digitalization
- Different conceptions of the European Social Dialogue:
  - employers consider it more and more as a discussion forum, they don't want to create new regulations
  - while workers representatives aim at negotiating binding rules

# Involvement in EU SD structures

- The topics discussed at the EU level can be determined by the European Commission (e.g. EPSR : work/life balance and social protection) or autonomously by social partners through a pluri-annual working programme
- Participates with the ETUC at the elaboration of the working programme.
- Among recent topics : resorbing underemployment, access to training, right to disconnect
- Example of binding outcome:
  - Since 2015, only an agreement has been concluded at the EU level on active ageing, without really concrete results at the national level.
  - More generally, the European social dialogue has produced only few results for many years. In the first years, different negotiations outcomes were translated into directives : framework agreement on [part-time work](#), framework agreement on [fixed-term work](#), framework agreement on parental leave...
  - This pattern changed at the beginning of 2000's when agreements signed by the European social partners began to be implemented by national social partners : telework and stress at work for example.
  - The last two agreements were effectively translated in France through national interprofessional agreements (telework and stress at work for example). Progressively, the discussions have shifted from binding outcomes towards voluntary outcomes, without concrete results.

# European semester

- TUs are consulted with the national authorities, but they believe their role is limited
- FO considers the European semester as an opportunity to recall our claims for a more social Europe.
- We consider that economic and social issues are not considered in a balanced way in the European semester. The analysis of the social and employment throughout the AGS and the country report is limited and taken into account very poorly and in a restrictive as far as recommendations are defined.
- In the last months, we felt the European commission keener to take into account our analysis and demands before the publication of the country report, especially through the implementation of the European pillar of social rights, which pushes the Commission to deal more deeply with social policies.

## National interviews – Ireland

# Involvement in EU SD structures

- Retail sector TU in Ireland, >35K members
- Only participates through UniGlobal
- EU level SD issues are well reflected in the national context
- Example of a legislation being prepared in the Irish parliament as a result of their lobbying and bringing up these issues
- Not so much involvement in the European semester
  - They are generally consulted
  - It's government's responsibility to transpose issues (top-down), generally works well

# Interactions, coalition building...

- Recall: being a TU member is not a constitutional right in Ireland, but it's based on a voluntary basis (no obligation, as in some countries)
- Where they have members, they engage mainly with employers, whom they find generally hostile
- No collective bargaining
- Post-crisis, during austerity, a lot of SD structures disappeared or disrupted due to budget cuts
- Topic defining: very democratic, starts at the local level (their members are workers)
- Brexit also has an impact on them: as it touches on so many issues, stakeholders who wouldn't talk to each other before Brexit, now start talking to each other!

## Project management and next steps

# Next steps – administrative

- Reporting:
  - Thank you all for your inputs for the technical and financial report of EESDA so far
  - The interim reporting is prepared and being submitted to the EC together with the mid-term financial reporting, request for pre-financing and first deliverable of the project (analytical and conceptual framework)
  - Deadline **TODAY** !
- Meeting with the project officer
  - Emphasis on communication and dissemination activities
  - Feeding the project website regularly is important
- Next (and last) project meeting date to be decided
  - (Early) July in Brussels? Doodle
- Final conference in Portugal
  - Deciding on the date ASAP – EC is interested in participating, but they need to know the details in advance

# Next steps – research activities (1)

- More intensive research activities than in the first year – we need to speed up
- WP2: stakeholder views
  - Further advertising of the online survey link to stakeholders – we are still not there yet!
    - Will also feed into the network analysis
  - Finalize semi-structured interviews with national stakeholders (10 interviews per country) – 6 countries overall + EU-level
  - Inputs need to be collected by **April 2019**
  - Deliverables:
    - List of interviewed social partners and stakeholders – **May 2019**
    - CELSI has a template for SK in shared folder, please add yours there
    - Working paper presenting the findings of the stakeholders' views in the articulation of SD – **May 2019**

# Next steps – research activities (2)

- WP3: case studies
  - 4 cases studies (1 case study per sector) for each country
  - 4 interviews per sector and per country -> 16 interviews per country
  - Drafting the case studies per sector and country
  - Deliverables:
    - List of interviewed social partners and stakeholders for case studies (**August 2019**)
    - 6 national reports presenting the 4 sectoral case studies (**August 2019**)
    - 6 national policy briefs (English and national language) summarizing national reports (**August 2019**)

# Next steps – research activities (3)

- WP4: comparative research
  - Drafting comparative report and policy brief (CELSI with contributions from all partners)
    - Deliverable: Comparative report – **October 2019**
    - Comparative policy brief – **October 2019**
  - Policy recommendations (CEPS, with inputs from all partners)
    - Report presenting policy recommendations on SD articulation and effectiveness, future challenges – **October 2019**

# Next steps – research activities

- WP5: dissemination and communication
  - Webinars: all partners (**until December 2019**)
    - Host webinars on a specific project topic
    - Video will be uploaded to the project website
  - Lunchtime meetings: all partners (**until December 2019**)
    - Organize a series of events with 1-2 speakers to debate on a core topic of the project
  - Final conference – **November 2019**
    - Decide on a date, agenda etc. early enough to start advertising in advance
  - Publications
    - Publish research on project website
    - Submit to academic journals – internal discussion on interests



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# Thank you!

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