



Industrial relations
Capacity building
for effective social dialogue:
2021 update

[Capacity building for effective social dialogue in the European Union](#)

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Introduction

Background and scope

The main objective of this working paper is to explore how to further support capacity building for effective social dialogue following the latest Eurofound publication (2020) .

To this end the **objectives** and **research questions** of the present on-demand request are the following

Objectives

- to identify capacity needs to be addressed, and
- to identify examples of good practice;
- to assess whether new/different needs have emerged in the context of the current mega-trends (climate change, digitalisation/automation) and the COVID-19 pandemic?

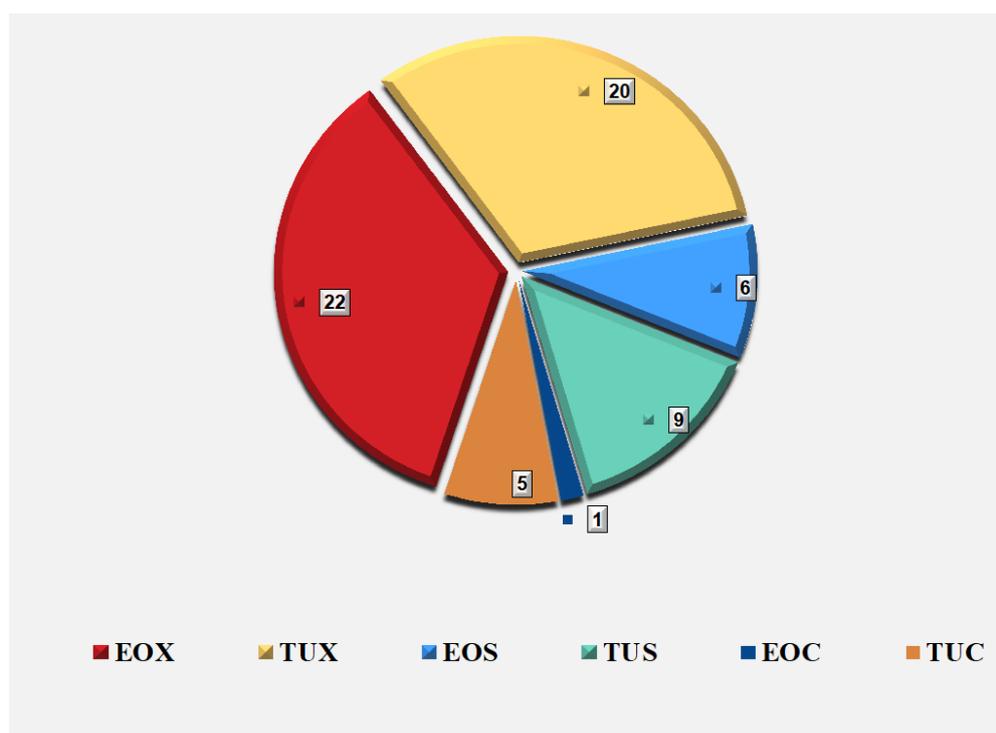
Research questions

- What needs for capacity-building can be identified through the social partners own work and initiatives?
- Which initiatives constitute good practice and could be the subject of mutual learning?
- Which new needs have emerged in the context of the current mega-trends (climate change, digitalisation/automation) and the covid-19 pandemic?

Methodology

The methodology of the report consists of a qualitative mapping exercise of national and sectoral approaches to capacity building for social dialogue. This was done via qualitative desk research of a subset of the Network of Eurofound Correspondents (NEC). A number of 13 Member States was identified on basis of the previous Eurofound research (2020) and developments in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic targeting those Member States which seem to have the most urgent capacity needs (BG, CZ, EE, EL, ES, HR, HU, LT, LV, PL, RO, SI, SK).

For the purpose of the completion of the questionnaire the NEC was asked to contact the most relevant national social partners to complement the desk research of the correspondent. In total, 63 national social partners were contacted, most of which at the cross-industry level (22 employers organisations and 20 trade unions). Furthermore 6 employers organisations and 9 trade unions replied from the sectoral level, and 6 social partners from the company level.

Graph 1: social partner contacted¹

Policy context

As part of the planned relaunch of social dialogue, the European Commission has been keen to strengthen the capacity building of social partners in the Member States. Already in late 2014, then European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker called for stronger emphasis on the capacity building of national social partners (European Commission, 2018).

In 2015, European cross-industry social partners prepared a joint declaration, which was approved at a thematic group meeting in January 2016. As there is no blueprint for social dialogue, the document provides some guiding principles and key messages for different areas about how social partners can be involved at EU level. It also offers a key message to improve the functioning and effectiveness of social dialogue and the capacity building of social partners in the Member States:

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 (ETUC et al., 2016)

On 16 June 2016, the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) adopted the Council conclusions, titled A new start for a strong social dialogue. The document stresses ‘the importance of capacity-building of social partners at national and sectoral level, which

¹ EOX = cross-industry employer organisation, EOS = sectoral employer organisation, EOC = company employer; TUX = cross-industry trade union, TUS = sectoral trade union, TUC = company trade union

could contribute – amongst other things – to improved representativeness of European social partners in negotiating their agreements’ (Council of the European Union, 2016).

The conclusions also acknowledge the following:

An effective social dialogue requires social partners that are resilient, representative, autonomous, mandated and equipped with all the capacities needed. Social partners also need institutional settings that allow their dialogue to be effective (Council of the European Union, 2016)

The Council then calls on Member States to

promote the building and strengthening of the capacities of the social partners through different forms of support, including legal and technical expertise. This should be ensured at all relevant levels, depending on the needs of countries and social partners, including to become solid and representative organisations (Council of the European Union, 2016).

Furthermore, the conclusions call on the European Commission to

contribute to strengthening the capacity of national social partners by promoting the use of European Structural and Investment Funds, notably the European Social Fund, and other relevant EU budget lines, to support social dialogue and capacity building, and encourage the promotion of knowledge-building on social dialogue and support capacity-building through mutual learning, identification, and exchanges of good practices (Council of the European Union, 2016).

On 27 June 2016, European cross-industry social partners, the European Commission and the Dutch Presidency of the Council of the European Union co-signed the quadripartite statement A new start for social dialogue. The document underlines the fundamental role of European social dialogue as a significant component of EU employment and social policymaking. The statement identifies actions to be undertaken by the signatories to further strengthen social dialogue at EU and national levels. All parties underline their intention and commitment to continue promoting the capacity of social partners (BusinessEurope et al, 2016).

As stated in a study commissioned by European cross-sector social partners, “there is a lack of reliable and comparable data on the resources made available for social partner capacity building through the ESF. Where such information is available, the amounts allocated tend to be small and calls for projects are only just being issued (Weber and Pavlovaite, 2018b)”. The study further elaborates that “the level of resources committed to social partner capacity building is limited and is insufficient to meet expressed needs.” According to the recommendations in the document Capacity building of social partners and the European Social Fund, European social partners should identify their concrete needs for capacity-building support; they should also determine the role of the ESF in strengthening social dialogue and supporting better implementation of the outcomes of European social dialogue (ETUC et al, 2018).

Employment Policy Guideline 7, adopted by the Council of the European Union on 16 July 2018 reads as follows:

Building on existing national practices, and in order to achieve more effective social dialogue and better socioeconomic outcomes, Member States should ensure the timely and

meaningful involvement of the social partners in the design and implementation of employment, social and, where relevant, economic reforms and policies, including through support for increased capacity of the social partners. The social partners should be encouraged to negotiate and conclude collective agreements in matters relevant to them, fully respecting their autonomy and the right to collective action (Council of the European Union, 2018).

On 17 November 2017, the EU Member States endorsed the European Pillar of Social rights at the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth which took place in Gothenburg, Sweden. Capacity building is mentioned in principle 8 on social dialogue and the involvement of workers: “Support for increased capacity of social partners to promote social dialogue shall be encouraged.”²

Two years later, in their joint employment report from 2019, the Commission and the Council state:

While there is no one-size-fits-all model, timely and meaningful involvement of social partners in policy design and implementation, including by providing support for increased capacity of social partners, should be considered as a common denominator for well performing and effective tripartite social dialogue systems. The latter is equally true for bipartite social dialogue (European Commission, 2019).

According to the 2019–2021 work programme of the European cross-industry social partners:

Capacity building activities remain a priority for the European social partners. They recognise that in order for the European social dialogue to have a positive impact, much needs to be done to strengthen and support social dialogue at all levels. In line with their commitments in the New Start for Social Dialogue, the European social partners will continue their efforts to better use the European social fund for social partners’ capacity building, and support their members, where needed, to achieve better implementation of EU social dialogue outcomes. A subgroup of the social dialogue committee was set up in 2015 on the basis of a two-year mandate to look into the implementation of the outcomes of European social dialogue (ETUC et al, 2019).

In January 2020 the new European Commission under President Ursula von der Leyen published a communication reaffirming the EU’s intention to ‘explore ways to promote social dialogue and collective bargaining and increase the capacity of unions and employer organisations at EU and national level’ (European Commission, 2020).

In February 2021 Ms Andrea Nahles, Special Advisor on Social Dialogue to Commissioner Nicolas Schmit (Jobs and Social Rights) presented her report on ‘Strengthening EU social dialogue’. In the foreword to the report Commissioner Schmit states that ‘(...) strengthening and promoting social dialogue and collective bargaining through capacity building is an important objective of this Commission.’ The Nahles report then enumerates capacity building to benefit national social partners as one of the three main proposals for strengthening social dialogue (European Commission 2021a, pp.6, 10).

² European industrial relations dictionary (2021), European pillar of social rights. See also https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/economy-works-people/jobs-growth-and-investment/european-pillar-social-rights/european-pillar-social-rights-20-principles_en.

On 4 March 2021 the European Commission published the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan outlining concrete actions to further implement the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights. The action plan mentions the importance of capacity building multiple times. Most prominently the action plan calls upon Member States to “(...) dedicate an appropriate amount to the capacity building of social partners and civil society organisations; 0.25% of ESF+ resources should be programmed when Member States have a country-specific recommendation in this area.”³

Finally, in the Porto Commitment of 7 May 2021 the EU level social partners call to “(..) promote autonomous social dialogue as a structuring component of the European Social Model and strengthen it at the European, national, regional, sectorial and company levels, with special emphasis on ensuring an enabling framework for collective bargaining within the various models that exist in the Member States (...).⁴

Definition of capacity building

Capacity building is not easily defined. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), ‘capacity’ is understood as the ability of people, organisations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully (OECD, 2006). Yet, capacity building is not easily defined. Floridi et al (2009) argue:

Despite its increasing importance from the point of view of dialogue and the activities of organisations, there is not, at this point in time, a single, unequivocal definition of the concept of ‘capacity building’ (Floridi et al, 2009).

Venner agrees that there ‘does not appear to be agreement on what is meant by capacity and what it means to develop capacity’ (Venner, 2014).

In the context of this report, Eurofound is focusing on social partners’ capacities and not those of Member States.

The European Commission gives the following definition of capacity building in its report *Industrial Relations in Europe 2008*:

a process of developing organisational, financial and personnel capacities of trade unions and employer organisations and enhancing their contribution to governance on both national and regional levels. Actions to enhance their capacity for social dialogue could consist of training on information, participation and negotiation mechanisms, strengthening the role of social partners in shaping working conditions and the functioning of the labour market, consolidating sectoral structures, improving the link between the national and EU-level social dialogue, assisting the implementation of European social dialogue outcomes and others (European Commission, 2009).

³ <https://op.europa.eu/webpub/empl/european-pillar-of-social-rights/en/>.

⁴ [Porto Social Commitment \(Portuguese presidency website, 7 May 2021\)](#)

Box 1: Definition of capacity building

In line with the above and for the purpose of this report, Eurofound defines **capacity building** as the enhancement of the skills, abilities and powers of social partners to engage effectively at different levels (EU, national, regional, sectoral, company and establishment) in:

- social dialogue
- collective bargaining
- (co-)regulating the employment relationship
- tripartite and bipartite consultations
- public policymaking
- influencing public policymaking via advocacy.

Ideally, this enhancement of abilities and powers should lead to an institutional context of stable and sustainable industrial relations of good quality. The 2016 Eurofound study *Mapping key dimensions of industrial relations* defines industrial relations as the collective and individual governance of work and employment (Eurofound, 2016). The report develops a compass for good industrial relations and a conceptual framework for mapping industrial relations, identifying four key dimensions: industrial democracy, industrial competitiveness, social justice and quality of work and employment.

Industrial democracy: It refers to the rights of employers and employees to participate in the decision-making defining the employment relationship. The concept acknowledges the autonomy of both sides of industry as collective organisations and their collective capacity to influence decision-making. Industrial democracy plays therefore a central role in Eurofound's conceptual framework, supporting the other three dimensions of industrial relations.

Industrial competitiveness: The ability of an economy to achieve a consistently high rate of productivity growth and good performance among its small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Social justice: The fair and non-discriminatory distribution of opportunities and outcomes within a society, in order to strengthen the capabilities of each individual for self-determination and self-realisation.

Quality of work and employment: Conditions of work and employment that provide career and employment security, health and well-being, the ability to reconcile working and non-working life, and the opportunity to develop skills over the life course.

Source: Eurofound (2020), [Capacity building for effective social dialogue](#), Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

The basic tenet of Eurofound's analytical framework is that a balanced and mutually reinforcing pursuit of efficiency (industrial competitiveness) and equity (social justice and quality of work and employment) is the most desirable industrial relations strategy for both employers and employees. The pursuit of a balanced strategy towards sustainable growth and equity requires coordinated efforts among the main actors concerned. To render such a strategy effective, both sides of industry need to develop their collective capacity to influence decision-making (industrial democracy).

1. Capacity-building needs

Table 1: institutional environment

Capacity needs	Employers			Trade unions		
	cross-sector	sector	company	cross-sector	sector	company
I. Institutional environment						
Enabling legal framework	BG, EL, HU, LV, RO, SI, SK (XRI) ⁵⁶	BG, EE, EL, HU, RO, SK (XI)	RO, SK (XI)	EL, HU, LV, RO, SI, SK (XS)	EE, EL, RO	EE, RO, SK(S) ⁷
Autonomy of the social partners	BG, EL, LV, SK (XR)	BG, EL, LV, SK(X)	HU, SK(X)	BG, SK(XS)	BG, HU, LV, SK(X)	SK(XS)
Supportive role of the state	BG, HU, LV, SI, SK(XR)	BG, HU, IT, LV, SI, SK(X)	SK(XI)	BG, EL, HU, LT, SI, SK(S)	BG, EL, HU, IT, LT, LV, SK(S)	LT, SK(S)

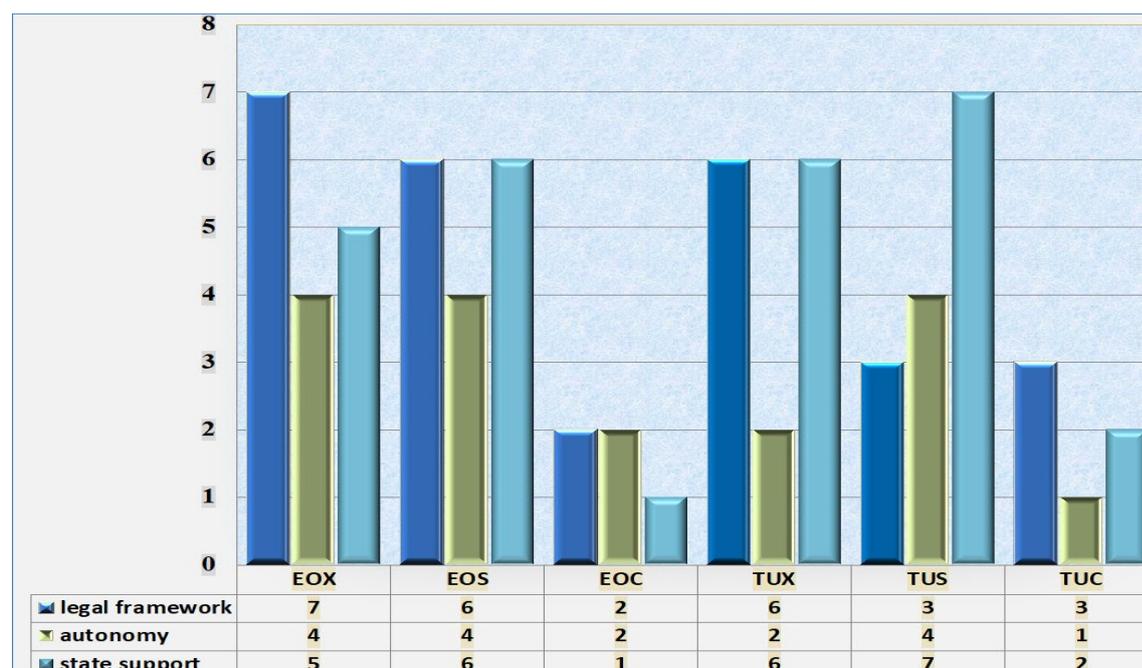
The institutional needs under investigation in this report are threefold: the legal framework, the autonomy of the social partners and support by the state and public authorities. The picture as sketched by the responses of the national social partners is very clear. The need for an enabling legal framework was identified the most often by the Network of Eurofound Correspondents as an important prerequisite for an effective social dialogue (27 nominations, cf. graph 2 below).

Second, state support for social dialogue was also deemed essential (27), whereas the autonomy of the social partners only scored third (17). From the latter low score one may conclude, that the autonomy of the social partners is by and large well established and not a lot of capacity building seems to be needed in this field. In some Member States (EL, RO) it is still the previous financial and economic crisis from 2008 until 2015 which is blamed for a serious dismantlement of the national industrial relations systems. In Slovakia, the employers report their dissatisfaction with not being sufficiently heard in the shaping of the governmental responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. The specific country narratives around these three pillars are summarised below.

⁵ X represents the opinion of the **largest employers'** and **trade union** organisations **AZZZ SR** and **KOZ SR**. R represents opinion of the **RUZ** and I represents the opinion of the **APZ employers' organisation**.

⁶ Cross-sector employers' organisations and trade unions see enabling legal framework as one of the two most important areas of capacity-building.

⁷ S represents the opinion of a **smaller cross-sector trade union SOS** (not involved in tripartite consultations at the HSR nor the national project Centre for Social Dialogue).

Graph 2: institutional needs⁸

Institutional environment

Bulgaria

According to the employers a revision of the framework for collective bargaining is necessary in the direction of more discretion as to issues that can be covered. The current Labour Code was drafted in times of a planned economy and was amended many times in the last 30 years. Although provisions on tri- and bi-partite cooperation were included, many work related issues are still regulated by law. This impedes social dialogue and does not incentivise its actors to develop skills and the capacity needed for effective social dialogue. Tripartite social dialogue is rather formal and effective consultation is rather the exception and the government could pay more attention to this mode of governance. The potential of the Centre for Human Resources Development and Regional Initiatives at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in delivering training and capacity building by including representatives of the social partners is not sufficiently used.

Croatia

The institutional and legal frameworks are generally adequate. The autonomy of the social partners is optimal while the supportive role of the state is sometimes insufficient. The situation of collective bargaining differs significantly between the private sector (almost exclusively at company level), and the public sector. In the public sector, collective bargaining takes mainly place at sub-sector levels (preschool education, health, public administration, etc.). Except for in tourism, construction and in the public sector, sectoral collective bargaining is underdeveloped, but not particularly weak. Some social partners, particularly from the trade union side, argue that the government is not very interested in sectoral collective bargaining. The coverage of collective agreements is almost 100% in

⁸ EOX = cross-industry employer organisation, EOS = sectoral employer organisation, EOC = company employer; TUX = cross-industry trade union, TUS = sectoral trade union, TUC = company trade union

the public sector, exceptionally high in local and regional government, and almost all state-owned companies have collective agreements.

Czechia

The social partners are of the opinion that both social dialogue and the institutional environment at national and sectoral levels are effective and working well. Tripartite and bipartite consultations, both formal and informal, take place at a regular basis.

Estonia

There are imminent needs for a more enabling or rather a more motivating legal environment. The main need for the trade unions is to gain strength and to establish good, cooperative relationships with the employers to negotiate agreements. The main needs, however, have not fundamentally changed in comparison to those of the 2018 financial and economic crisis.

With regard to the legal environment two provisions are said to undermine the capacity of trade unions. Firstly, as of 2012 it is possible to unilaterally terminate a collective agreement upon expiry. Prior to 2012, the agreement remained automatically valid until a new agreement was concluded (so-called continuation upon expiry). This provision discourages continuous collective bargaining, since it is very easy for employers to terminate agreements and it is rather difficult to renegotiate new agreements. Another undermining factor is the existence of extension mechanisms which extend the protection and coverage of collective agreements beyond trade union members which, in turn, is encouraging a free rider behaviour with negative impact on union membership.

Greece

Collective agreements (national, sectoral, company) play a minor role, and the labour market is regulated exclusively by statutes. The lack of an institutional framework supporting collective bargaining weakens social dialogue, and, ultimately, the operational capacity of management and labour. There is also a lack of commitment of the respective governments to the tripartite consultation bodies. As a rule, policy decisions are made unilaterally by the government and the opinions of the Economic and Social Committee (OKE) are not taken into account.

Latvia

Collective bargaining per se takes place at all levels – national, sectoral, regional and company level. The main institutional weakness of the Latvian industrial relations system meriting efforts of capacity building is linked to the fact that at sectoral and regional levels only few, and general agreements are being concluded.

Both social partners have underlined the importance of the autonomy of the social partners. On the trade unions side all sectoral trade unions are members of LBAS and are independent. Yet, the congruence of the domain of a sector with the one of a sectoral trade union is rather limited. In other words, not all sectors have their own sector level trade union and employers organisations and the composition of membership in existing organisations does not match the sector demarcation by NACE classification. For instance, all industry sectors are represented by one trade union only – the Latvian Industrial Workers Trade Union (LIA). Due to shrinking membership in the sectors, many sectoral trade unions were not able to continue their activities and one after another merged into LIA.

Enabling legal framework

Greece

During the last decade social dialogue in Greece has followed a declining path both in terms of quantity and quality. The economic crisis and the implementation of fiscal adjustment programmes from 2010 to 2019 led to the abolishment of the institutional framework of social dialogue and collective bargaining. In this new landscape social dialogue is quasi non-existent or at best weak. The current needs for capacity building for social dialogue are varied, but urgent and imminent, This is in particular true with regard to the institutional framework and the effective participation of the social partners in industrial relations processes. The replacement of the previous minimum wage-setting system via national collective agreement by a statutory minimum wage from 2010 onwards in combination with the abolition of the continuation of collective agreements upon expiry and the weakening of the role of arbitration, produced a rather fragile institutional framework for collective bargaining by way of an un-coordinated decentralisation.

Romania

Legislative reform to promote capacity building for effective social dialogue is one of the most important needs in Romania. The social dialogue legislation was amended in 2011, despite the opposition of the social partners. The legislative changes had deep and negative effects on social dialogue in Romania. The Social Dialogue Law (62/2011) abolished collective bargaining at national level, removed the possibility for unions to obtain representativeness by affiliation to a representative confederation and raised the representativeness thresholds at company level. These legislative changes have deepened the structural crisis which trade unions have been facing since 1989: low legitimacy, weak mobilisation capacity, declining membership and lack of skills.

The reforms have made it considerably more difficult for trade unions and employers organizations to engage in social dialogue. The cross-sectoral organizations were among the most affected. Until 2011, the representative national trade union organizations and employers organization were involved in annual collective bargaining rounds at national level, the outcome of which was the national labour collective agreement, which set a national minimum wage, regulated working time and working conditions for all employees. The abolishment of collective bargaining at national level by law left the social partners in a difficult position. They have been deprived of an essential function, the exercise of which is directly linked to their institutional capacity and expertise. The role of the national social partners was reduced to the involvement in different fora of tripartite and bipartite social dialogue, which in many cases are limited to rather formal processes and outcomes. Legislative reforms aiming at re-introducing collective bargaining at national level are thus crucial for strengthening the capacity of the social partners.

The social partners at sectoral level were also affected. The 2011 legislative reform has re-defined the economic sectors of activity and has imposed new legal conditions for collective bargaining at sectoral level. Prior to 2011, the trade unions were organized along economic branches (32 in total). The 2011 law redefined 29 industrial sectors eligible for collective bargaining according to NACE activity codes. It obliged the social partners to restructure and to prove their representativeness in the re-defined sectors. The outcome of the reform was the de facto impossibility of the social partners to participate in social dialogue and collective bargaining at sectoral level. While trade unions from public sectors (e.g. health care, education) were affected to some extent, the social

partners in the private sector were hit harder. In Romania, not one sectoral collective agreement was concluded in the private sector after 2011. As at national level, legislative reforms unlocking the current deadlock of sectoral social dialogue and collective bargaining are strongly needed for capacity building.

The capacity of company trade unions was also negatively affected by the Social Dialogue Act. The increase in the representativeness thresholds and changes legal criteria for participation in collective bargaining had negative effects on the capacity of company trade unions. Previous chronic problems, such as poor expertise and low membership have been aggravated after the 2011 legislative reform.

Slovakia

The social partners are not satisfied with the existing legal framework for social dialogue, which does not allow for the effective use of their knowledge and capacities. According to them, national level social dialogue at the tripartite Economic and Social Council (HSR) is rather formal. Even when the social partners submit their requested comments, they are often not adequately followed-up by the government and nor taken up in draft legislation. Particular dissatisfaction emerged recently in the preparation of legislation and measures to alleviate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy and employees. The employers (AZZZ) in the Crisis Staff for the Economy presented several proposals but did not obtain any feedback on their initiatives. They also submitted comments and proposals to the National Recovery Plan but again without any feedback. It also can happen that both social partners agree on changes to draft legislation, but then the coalition government does not take these proposed modifications into consideration.

KOZ SR, the smaller cross-sector trade union, does not participate in the national tripartite social dialogue. Furthermore, the trade unions associated to Spoločné odbory Slovenska (SOS) are not satisfied with the existing institutional framework, which does not cater for their participation in the national tripartite social dialogue at the HSR. In order to elicit their opinion and avail of the professional capacities of smaller cross-sector trade unions, SOS proposes to modify the current institutional framework for tripartite consultations.

Supportive role of the state

State and public support for social dialogue was also mentioned as being important for rendering social dialogue more effective. This contextual condition was judged to be almost at a similar footing with an enabling legislative framework.

Italy

In recent years the issues of representation and representativeness have gained momentum due to the proliferation on industry-wide agreements signed by organisations of limited and uncertain representativeness and because of the emerging debate about the introduction of a legal minimum wage. The social partners reached a number of inter-confederal agreements in the period from 2011-2014 to measure and certify trade union representativeness, in order to introduce a threshold both for participating in negotiations on industry-wide agreements and for the validity of these agreements at national level. The agreed system, which uses membership and election results for workplace union structures for each trade union, requires the collection of workplace membership data through administrative channels. This collectively agreed voluntary system has proved to be

particularly complex and cumbersome, so that the social partners seem to consider a legislative intervention to make this system mandatory. The same system could be used to establish the reference sectoral collective agreements to identify the minimum wage rates to be applied to workers, as for art. 36 of the Constitution (fair wage), or even to extend them *erga omnes*, according to art. 39 of the Constitution. These developments have prompted a debate on the introduction of representativeness criteria also for employers associations. For all of this, the support of the state is crucial.

Lithuania

Even though the number of sectoral and cross-sectoral collective agreements has increased, both national trade union confederations and sectoral trade unions note that a positive attitude towards social dialogue from public authorities is still lacking. Both national and sectoral trade union organisations point out that the supportive role of the state at cross-sector, sector and company levels would substantially contribute to the development of better industrial relations in the public sector in Lithuania.

Slovenia

Employer associations and trade unions emphasize that the state should be more supportive in promoting collective bargaining and involving the social partners in various strategies, action plans, the European Semester and other policy measures in order to take full advantage of all the benefits of social dialogue and the stronger legitimacy of solutions achieved in this way.

Particularly the unions emphasize that the situation in this area is currently far from optimal. The Slovenian government, that took office in March 2020, appointed its representatives to the main consultative and coordinative body for social dialogue, the Economic and Social Council (ESC), only at the end of April 2020. This means that several initial anti-COVID-19 legislative measures were adopted without social dialogue. The criticism about the government's weak social dialogue intensified during the whole year, but the excuse brought forward was the need for rapid action in the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the end of the year, the relationship between employers associations and trade unions also worsened due to their disagreement on the minimum wage. While the employers supported the freezing of the minimum wage from 1 January 2021 onwards as a measure to help the economy in times of COVID-19, the trade unions strongly opposed this move and announced a general strike at the beginning of 2021 if adopted. The trade unions demand that the minimum wage is increased according to the Minimum Wage Act, amended in 2018. According to the new rule, from 1 January 2021 the minimum wage must be at least 20 % higher than the minimum cost of living. The government initially agreed with employers and included a minimum wage freeze in the proposal of the anti-COVID19 legislation, but it later dropped this provision. At the time of reporting, the legislation had not yet been adopted in the National Assembly.

Industrial relations processes and advocacy

When it comes to the assessment of capacity-building needs in relation to industrial relations processes and advocacy the picture is also very clear. The vast majority of nominations from the NEC is focused on social dialogue (40 nominations). Second, it is the core industrial relations process of collective bargaining scoring high (34 nominations) when capacity needs are being scrutinised.

It is, in particular the lack of and need for sectoral collective bargaining which is stressed as an urgent capacity need in a number of member States (EL, EE, PL, SK) .

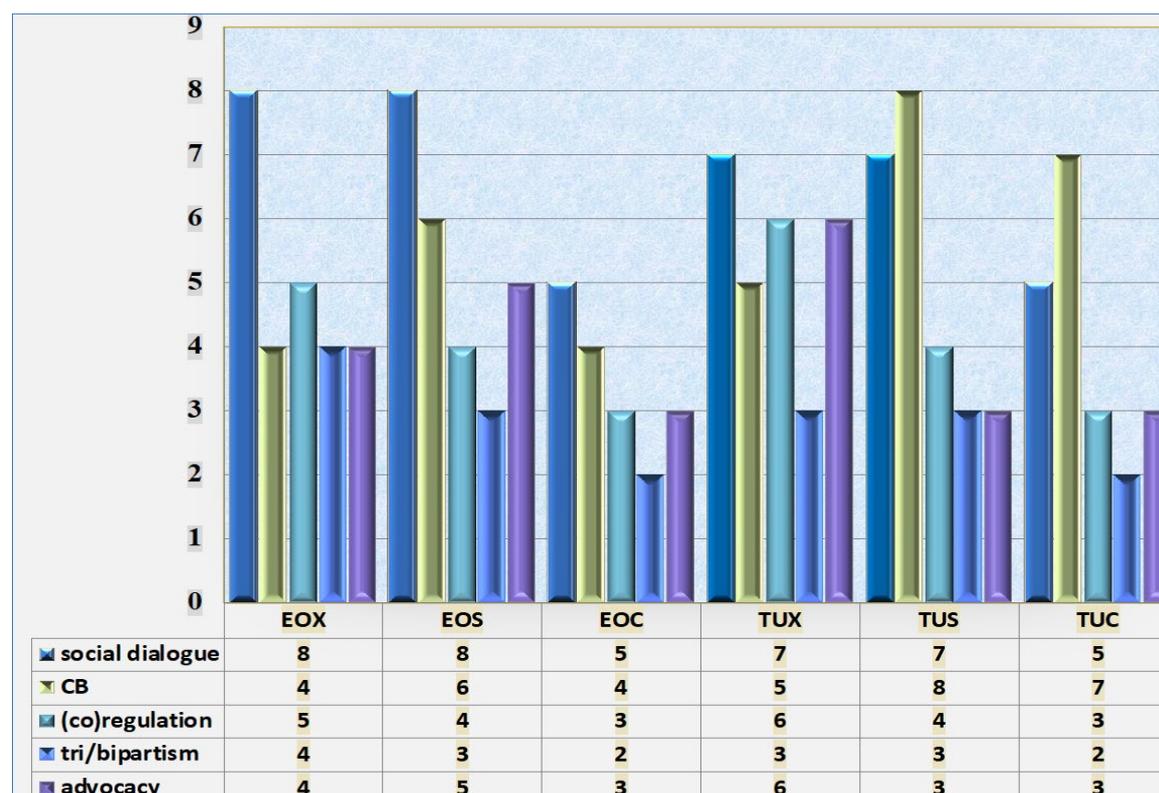
Table 2: needs regarding industrial relations processes and advocacy

Capacity needs	Employers			Trade unions		
	cross-sector	sector	company	cross-sector	sector	company
II. Effective engagement in						
social dialogue	BG, EL, ES, HR, HU, RO, SI, SK(XRI)	BG, EL, HR, HU, LV, RO, SI, SK(X)	BG, EL, HR, HU, SK(X)	BG, EL, ES, HR, HU, RO, SK(XS)	BG, EL, HR, HU, LV, RO, SK(S)	BG, EL, HR, LV, SK(S)
collective bargaining	BG, EL, HU ⁹ , SK(X)	BG, CZ, HU, EL, RO, SK(XR)	BG, CZ, EL, SK(XI)	BG, EL, PL, SI, SK(XS)	BG, CZ, EE, EL, HU, PL, RO, SK(XS)	BG, CZ, EE, EL, HU, RO, SK (XS)
(co) regulating the employment relationship	BG, ES, HU, LV, SK (XRI) ¹⁰	BG, EE, LV, SK(XRI)	BG, EE, SK(XRI)	BG, ES, HU, LV, SI, SK(XS)	BG, EE, HU, LV,	BG, EE, HU
tripartite and bipartite consultations	BG, EL, IT, PL	BG, EL, LV	BG, EL,	BG, EL, PL	BG, EE, EL	BG, EL
influencing public policy via advocacy	BG, HR, HU, SK(XRI)	BG, HR, HU, LV, SK(XR)	BG, HR, SK(XI)	BG, HR, HU, IT, SI, SK(XS)	BG, HR, RO	BG,HR, RO

These two front runners are followed with a considerable gap by co-regulation (25), advocacy (24) and bi/tripartite consultations (17). The detailed picture in the Member States is sketched below.

⁹ Highest score (5) at all levels.

¹⁰ Cross-sector employers' organisations and trade unions see effective engagement in (co) regulating the employment relationship as one of the two most important areas of capacity-building.

Graph 3: needs regarding industrial relations processes and advocacy¹¹

Effective engagement in collective bargaining

Croatia

The effective engagement of the social partners in social dialogue is in some cases unsatisfactory due to a relatively short tradition and a lack of mutual trust. Trust between the social partners, based on values such as responsibility, solidarity and cooperation, must be enhanced and/or consolidated. However, the situation is improving and the social partners ran together various programmes for strengthening of social dialogue, primarily with the financial support from the European Social Fund.

Estonia

In terms of effective engagement in collective bargaining an enhanced cooperation of the employers is needed. Sectoral level collective bargaining is not well developed due to the fact that on the employers' side most of the organisations are business organisations not engaging in collective bargaining. These business associations often assert that the law sets the necessary working conditions and that individual agreements between the employer and the employee can cater for the remainder. This attitude impacts negatively on the capacity of the trade unions, and in turn discourages worker to join trade unions. From the employers' perspective, the sectoral agreements in force are neither effective nor sufficiently enforced (e.g. transportation sector). This leads to the

¹¹ EOX = cross-industry employer organisation, EOS = sectoral employer organisation, EOC = company employer; TUX = cross-industry trade union, TUS = sectoral trade union, TUC = company trade union

phenomenon that not all employers adhere to the concluded sectoral agreement leading to unfair competition.

Greece

The number of sectoral agreements severely declined in favour of company agreements and individual employment contracts and unilateral company decisions. This happened despite the fact that initially the situation had improved with the introduction of the procedure of extension of collective agreements on basis of law 4549 (14.6.2018) and a circular (no. 32921/2175 of 13.6.2018). If the members of a signatory employers' association employ at least the 51% of employees of a specific sector, then the agreement is extended to the whole sector. Subsequent legislation, however, setting additional criteria for the implementation of sectoral agreements (law 4635/2019) and the COVID-19 pandemic did not help to revive social dialogue nor collective bargaining. Today, there are only a few sectoral agreements in force: electricity, seasonal firefighters, hotel workers, cement companies, foreign airlines, municipal water companies, tour guides, electricians, oil and gas companies, ship agencies, bakeries, tobacco industry and banking.

Poland

Trade unions at all levels emphasize the need to engage in collective bargaining. In their opinion, very often individual employers do not conduct negotiations in good faith (as required by Polish law), which makes it impossible to sign collective labour agreements. For example, no foreign retailing network has such an agreement in place, despite the fact that there are several hundred thousand people employed in this sector. Collective bargaining coverage is one of the lowest in the EU. Particularly worrying is the reluctance of employers organizations to conduct sectoral collective bargaining, especially where foreign capital dominates (e.g. steel, automotive industry). There are currently only 2 nationwide sectoral collective agreements in the private sector.

Romania

Effective engagement in collective bargaining is one of the most important needs when it comes to capacity building. This is valid in the case of employer organisations, but more so for trade unions. Although the capacity of employer organisations is rather weak with regard to their effective engagement in collective bargaining, they often dispose of more resources to pay professional experts for support in collective negotiations. Trade unions are mostly relying on their own internal resources, which are often insufficient. Especially at company level, in the absence of staff dedicated to trade union work the trade union leaders very often have full-time jobs and only dispose of limited time resources to be allocated to trade union activities. This translates into weak capacities to for collective bargaining due to limited know how and lack of expertise. Finally, the fragmentation of both trade union and employer organisations also has negative impacts on the capacity for effective collective bargaining.

Slovakia

The trade unions consider collective bargaining as the third most important area, in which capacities of the social partners should be enhanced. The share of employees covered by collective agreements is very low and there is no effective support to collective bargaining. About 26% of the workforce is covered by company collective agreements (private sector: about 15% / public sector: about 65%).

Sector level employers organisations are missing in several sectors. Thus, sectoral collective bargaining is limited and employees are less covered by multi-employer collective agreements than previously. Weak support for collective bargaining at sectoral and company level is also a major concern for the trade unions.

Effective engagement in social dialogue and bi-/tripartite and consultations

Greece

In its sectoral Development Plan 2021-2025, the Ministry of Labour, taking into account the observations of the last Greek country report in the process of the European Semester (27 February 2020), includes among the immediate priorities and necessary actions:

- the pursuit of increasing the participation of the social partners in policy planning and improving social dialogue;
- assessing the request of the social partners to establish a high level Tripartite Consultation Committee to strengthen their role in public policy-making processes.

The social dialogue for this Development Plan was conducted through an online public consultation (November - December 2020) where, among other stakeholders, the social partners had the right to post comments without any additional forms of genuine social dialogue. A similar situation of ineffective involvement is observed in all areas of government policy. Established tripartite consultation bodies are underperforming (e.g. vocational education). In the field of work, the competent tripartite body of the Ministry of Labour (Supreme Labour Council), has not met for more than a year.

Hungary

Both employers and trade unions agree that capacity building for effective engagement in social dialogue is needed. At the moment the engagement of the social partners in social dialogue at all levels is mainly formal. The institutional framework does exist at the different (cross-sectoral, sectoral) levels, but the social partners lack real rights in the decision-making process.

At the macro-level the national body for effective tripartite cooperation between workers' and employer representatives and the government, the OÉT (National Interest Reconciliation Council), ceased to exist in 2012. The OÉT is not a genuine tripartite decision-making body, since the government only consults the three employer organisations and three trade union confederations. Instead, selected trade union confederations and employer organizations of the private sector were invited by the government to establish the Permanent Consultation Forum in the Competitive Sector (VKF) to be consulted on industrial policy and labour market issues.

The actual official national forum for tripartite social dialogue is the National Economic and Social Committee (NGTT). However, it includes not only the representatives of the established social partners (employers and trade unions), but also representatives of business chambers, churches, civil and scientific organisations, etc.. There are no permanent government delegates, just governmental observers. The NGTT is an information and advisory forum only without any rights to make decisions. The institutions and practices of cross-sectoral social dialogue in place are not suitable for an efficient social dialogue. The current government does not appear interested in a

genuine social dialogue, and this is the case also in the field of conciliation and mediation in the public service. The functioning of the OKÉT (National Council for the Reconciliation of Interests in Public Service) has become formal as well. In the OKÉT sessions, the government side is represented by middle managers without a genuine mandate to negotiate.

An effective engagement of the partners in social dialogue also lacks at sectoral level. In the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees (ÁPB) the delegates of representative trade unions and employer organisations have the right to mediate and negotiate for a given sector. According to its original purpose the ÁPBs would have helped to pave the way for sectoral collective agreements. However, since 2016 their operation has become perfunctory, and by now, their activities highly understaffed and underfinanced. The Social Dialogue Centre, founded in 2007 by the Social and Labour Minister. On 1 January 2020 the Social Dialogue Centre came under the supervision of the Ministry of Innovation and Technology performing its duties only at a minimum level.

Italy

Social concertation has weakened in recent years, as governments adopted a more unilateral stance in the introduction of economic, social and employment policies. Tripartite social dialogue has substantially vanished. Bipartite relations between the government and the unions or the employers have taken its place, but mostly as a way to inform the social partners of the initiatives taken by the government or, after that, to merely collect the opinions of the social partners. The quality of social dialogue would improve if measures could be discussed and developed jointly, especially in a tripartite setting.

Latvia

In general, social dialogue is about “larger” issues – legislation in general, labour legislation, social legislation, tax legislation, the budget, etc. In Latvia the social partners are not restricted in their involvement in these issues. However, their insufficient capacity is one of the factors limiting the effectiveness of their participation. According to LBAS, the trade unions participate in national social dialogue> However, mainly due to underfunding, they lack the capacity for successful social dialogue at sectoral and regional levels, both in terms of human and material resources. Consequently, workers are not represented effectively at these levels.

Poland

The government’s tripartite consultations are notoriously subject to very a critical appraisal by the social partners. This is due to the fact that usually the government 'consults' on the decision already made. According to experts from trade unions and employers organizations, the events related to the COVID-19 pandemic showed that the government completely ignores the principles of social dialogue in situations of crisis. Experts emphasize that the recent months have shown the weaknesses of the consultation processes of the social partners by the government. They also showed the very poor quality of the legislation in place. It seems that one of the remedial actions should be a more comprehensive involvement of the social partners in the preparation of strategies and of legal acts. This observation fully coincides with the guidelines received by Poland as part of the European Semester process.

Slovakia

Trade union and employer organisations consider their effective involvement in social dialogue as a very important area, in which the capacities of the social partners need to be strengthened. Particular attention should be given to their participation in cross-sector tripartite social dialogue which should play a more important role in the preparation of legislation on the economy, employment conditions and social policy issues. The employers welcome the establishment of different fora for consultation with the government, but see their operations as very formal.

The social partners criticise that the usual procedures of social dialogue are often avoided by the government in the preparation of new legislation or amendments to existing legislation. In 2020, the social partners were rarely consulted by the government at the tripartite HSR. Employers as well as trade unions accept this in case of urgent COVID-19 measures. Yet, they are not satisfied with avoiding standard procedures of tripartite social dialogue, since there were only two meetings in 2020. In case of 'short-track' legislation procedures it is usual that the social partners are not consulted.

The adoption of new a scheme for short-time working, so called "Rarebit", can be mentioned as a good, however, rare example of social dialogue between the social partners, particularly between employers and the government. Nevertheless, according to the AZZZ SR, there are still attempts to avoid the institutional framework of social dialogue. According to the trade unions (KOZ SR), some recently adopted changes in the labour legislation weaken the role of trade unions, and are not in compliance with ILO Conventions.

In sum, the social partners consider their consistent involvement in consultations with the government on all relevant changes to economic, labour and social legislation as a key issue for the improvement of tripartite social dialogue.

Spain

Trade unions and employer organisations interviewed stressed the need for a law on institutional participation that would provide stability to their role in the policy-making process and to their participation in social dialogue and in other bi-partite or tripartite institutions. According to the trade unions, their participation in policy-making and social dialogue remains unstable and contingent on the willingness of the government to involve them. For employers, it is important to clearly define the criteria for participating in social dialogue as well and being involved in other institutions in order to guarantee that only the most representative actors participate.

Even though regulations for institutional participation have been passed in the majority of Autonomous Communities, a similar set of rules has not been negotiated at national level. Before the COVID-19 crisis, there were negotiations in the context of social dialogue on this issue and a draft proposal was elaborated, but it was never passed. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic crisis, the trade unions admitted that this was no longer on top of the social dialogue agenda, but would be pushed again once the most urgent issues related to the recovery would be discussed.

According to both trade unions and employers organisations, the law on institutional participation would not only give stability to social dialogue, but would also provide institutional and financial resources to maintain the technical and analytical skills. Trade unions and employers coincided in

the view that the large number of committees and social dialogue fora put a considerable pressure on their staff. The law on institutional participation would endow the social partners with the necessary human and analytical resources in order to perform their social dialogue functions more effectively.

Advocacy

Croatia

A further field that should be improved is influencing public policy via advocacy because some politicians and a significant part of the general public have little knowledge of the importance of social dialogue and the role of social partners in policy making.

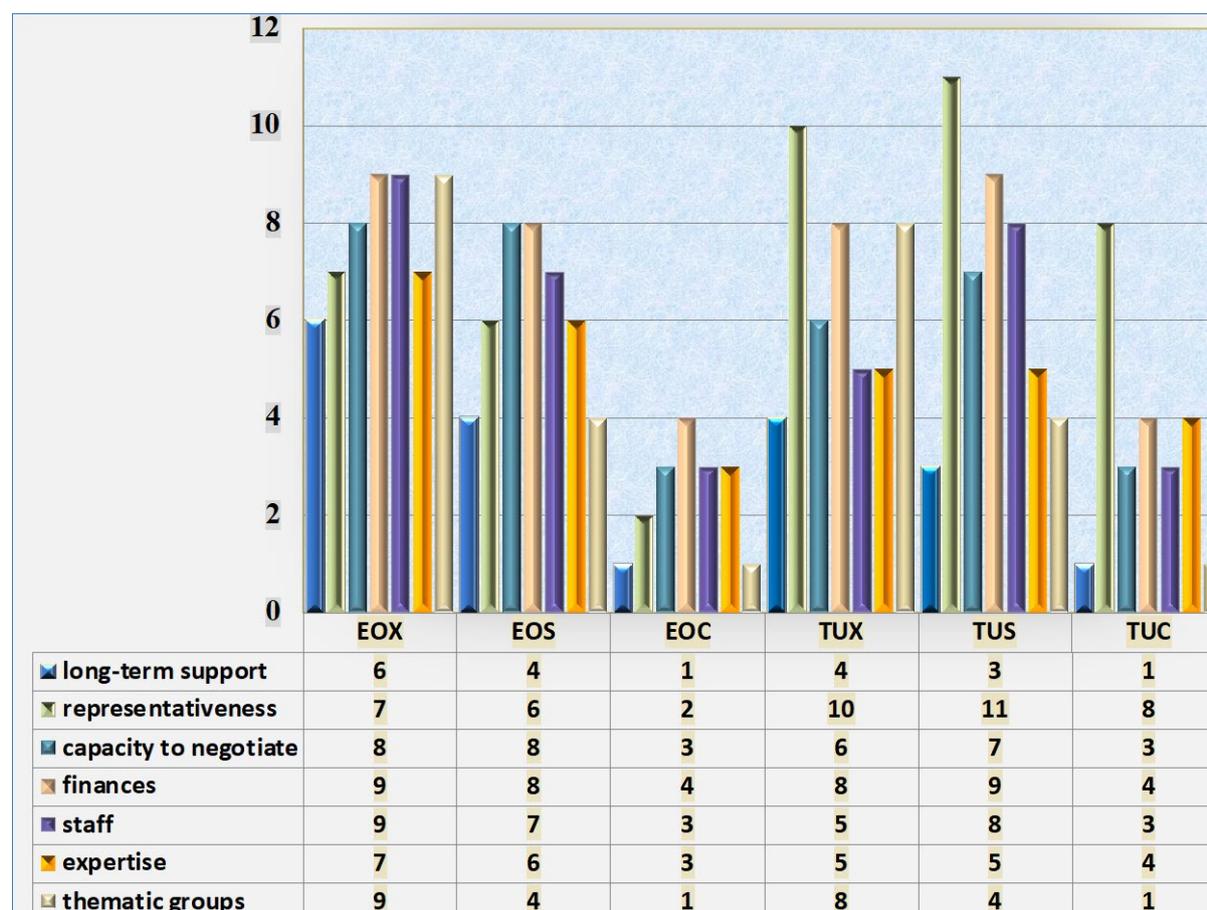
Structural capacity

Table 3: structural needs

Capacity needs	Employers			Trade unions		
III. Structural capacity						
long-term comprehensive support of the actors	BG, HU, LV, PL, SI, SK(XR)	BG, HU, LV, SK(X)	SK(X)	BG, HU, LV, SK(XS)	BG, LV, SK(XS)	SK(XS)
increase membership / representativeness	BG, HU, LV, PL, RO, SI, SK (XR)	BG, EL, IT, LV, RO, SK(X)	EL, SK(XI)	BG, CZ, EE, EL, ES, LT, LV, RO, SI, SK(S)	BG,CZ, EE, EL, ES, HU, IT, LT, LV, RO, SK(XS)	CZ, EE, EL, ES, IT, LT, LV, SK(XS)
stronger capacity / mandate to negotiate	BG, CZ, EE, HR, HU, LT, PL, SK(XR)	BG, EL, HR, HU, LT, LV, RO, SK(X)	EL, HR, SK(X)	BG, CZ, EL, HR, HU, SK(X)	BG, EE, EL, HR, LV, HU, SK(XS)	EL, HR, SK(XS)
better financial resources	BG, CZ, EE, ES, HU, LT, LV, SI, SK(XR)	BG, CZ, EE, EL, HU, LT, LV, SK(X)	EL, HU, LT, SK(X)	BG, CZ, ES, HU, LT, LV, SI, SK(S)	BG, CZ, EE, EL, ES, HU, LT, LV, SK(XS)	ES, EL, LT, SK(XS)
sufficient staff	BG, EE, ES, HU, LT, LV, RO, SI, SK(XR)	BG, EE, HU, LT, LV, RO, SK(X)	EL, LT, SK(X)	EE, LT, LV, RO, SI	BG, EE, EL, HU, LT, LV, RO SK(S)	EL, LT, SK(S)
better access to expertise	BG, EE, HU ¹² , LT, LV, SI, SK(XRI)	BG, EE, EL, HU, LT, SK(X)	IT, LT, SK(X)	BG, EE, HU, LT, LV	BG, EE, HU, LT, SK(S)	HU, IT, LT, SK(S)
forming thematic groups for specific topics (e.g. EU Semester)	BG, CZ, EL, ES, HU, LT, LV, SI, SK(XR)	BG, CZ, HU, SK(X)	SK(X)	BG, CZ, EL, ES, HU, LV, SI, SK(XS)	BG, CZ, LT, SK(XS)	SK(X)

¹² Highest score (5) at levels indicated.

other					EE ¹³	EE
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Graph 4: structural needs¹⁴

In comparison to the other strands of capacity needs (institutional environment and skills) the structural capacity needs score by far the highest. On top of this strand we find the challenge linked to membership and representativeness of the social partners (44 nominations). This ‘top scorer’ is followed by financial needs (42), the capacity/mandate to negotiate (35) and issues linked to more and better staff and human resources (35). These scores of the three areas of structural capacity needs – taken together – weigh far higher than any of the cumulative top three scores of the previous ones (institutional environment and industrial relations processes) or the following one (skills). From this one may cautiously conclude, that the structural capacity needs of the social partners surpass the ones in the other strands of observation.

¹³ EAKL notes that there is no good model to organise employees in small, medium and micro enterprises (majority of enterprises, i.e. more than 90%).

¹⁴ EOX = cross-industry employer organisation, EOS = sectoral employer organisation, EOC = company employer; TUX = cross-industry trade union, TUS = sectoral trade union, TUC = company trade union

Membership and representativeness

Bulgaria

The trade unions need to increase their membership base, in particular in private services and the new economy.

Croatia

The trade unions have been rather unsuccessful in extending their membership base to SMEs and new firms in general. The traditional industry with many trade unions members is gradually disappearing, while the service sector is employing more and more workers who are not particularly interested in trade union membership and collective bargaining. Many younger people work on short term projects and via web platforms and do not have appropriate negotiation partners. Furthermore, around 6 to 10 thousand workers are on temporary agency work contracts. These workers are not very attracted by trade union membership and do not have appropriate negotiation partners, while trade unions have major difficulties in recruiting these categories of workers.

Czechia

The most important and long-term problem is the declining number of trade union members. This is a very sensitive issue in Czechia. Since there is no obligation for trade unions to publish membership figures, it is difficult to obtain data. Although the rate of decline has slowed down recently, it continues to hamper an effective engagement in collective bargaining, especially at company level, where the number of collective agreements is decreasing year by year. Compared to the trade unions the membership base of the various employer organisations has remained stable in recent years, although this may change in the wake of the COVID-19 repercussions. Some employers are also not interested in collective bargaining at company or higher (sectoral) levels (e.g. automotive and gas).

Estonia

A new need for representativeness criteria recently emerged. According to the current legislation provisions of multi-employer collective agreements on wages, working time and rest periods may be extended. This mechanism has been used for years to extend agreements in the health care and transport sectors and for setting the national minimum wage. The social partners have realised that representativeness criteria are needed for such extensions. This is why in 2018 the peak-level social partners concluded a good practice agreement on the extension of collective agreements by setting representativeness criteria for the social partners. According to the non-binding agreement, only multi-employer agreements concluded between the most representative social partners should be extended. The most representative social partners are those with the highest number of members. In case of similar membership levels, the organisation which is a member of a peak level social partner will be considered the most representative. The extended collective agreement cannot cover more than one sector of field of activity. The Supreme Court ruled in June 2020 that the current law did not allow for signatory parties to extend collective agreements to an entire sector, i.e. to those employers who are not signatory parties or who are not members of the employer associations which had signed the agreement. As a response to the Court ruling, the Ministry of Social Affairs plans to establish official representativeness criteria, according to which an agreement could be extended if the members of the employers association employ together at least 20% of employees in the sector concerned. No criterion for trade unions is currently foreseen. The employers are not

entirely satisfied with the proposal and suggest that the employers association should employ at least 50% of the employees in the sector, to ensure that the freedom of enterprise is guaranteed and the interests of smaller groups of employees or employers are not dominating the sector. They also see the need to establish a representativeness criteria for trade unions to avoid situations in which a very small share of employees could agree conditions that do not represent the interests of the majority of the workforce in the sector.

Italy

The erosion of membership is less pronounced in Italy than in other European countries and density figures have remained fairly stable in recent years at around one third of employees. Nevertheless, maintaining and expanding membership remains a key objective of trade unions, especially in service sectors and among non-standard workers, with a special attention to younger workers.

Latvia

In small and medium-sized enterprises the number of employees is often too small for establishing employee representatives. Thus, collective bargaining can easily be replaced by individual employment agreements: sectoral level bargaining could solve this dilemma. In large companies the involvement of sectoral trade union may help to persuade employers about the mutual benefits of collective bargaining. Nevertheless, strong membership at company level is the basis for sound social dialogue at the sectoral and national level. The need for a more solid membership base is more crucial on the trade unions' side. In fragmented sectors (e.g. construction) representativeness is a key issue, because employers are organised in different organisations which are mainly involved in advocacy instead of collective bargaining.

Another argument links low levels of collective agreements to overly rigid norms of labour law which was adopted in 2002. There is an acute need for innovative collective bargaining processes (e.g. to involve small and medium-sized economic units). Also, the ability of the social partners to assist lower level social dialogue organisations in their efforts of increasing membership by advice, guidance, and participation in the negotiation processes with – at times reluctant employers.

Romania

To be representative and to be entitled to be involved in collective bargaining, a company trade union must reach a membership of a minimum 50% of the company employees. This leads to a situation in which about 85% of the collective agreements at company level are not concluded by trade unions, but by representatives of the employees (an alternative institution for representing the workers' interest at company level in those companies in which the trade union organizations are not representative according to the law).

At sectoral level, the legal criteria for representativeness are 7% of the sectoral workforce for trade unions and 10% for employer organizations. In many sectors, reaching these criteria is very difficult, particularly in sectors like commerce or textile with high numbers of employees concentrated in small-sized companies, which are legally and practically difficult to organize. A representativeness criterion of 50% of the total workforce is imposed to both employer organizations and trade unions for the extension of collective agreement at sectoral level. This is seen as an additional obstacle for collective bargaining at sectoral level resulting in an extremely low collective bargaining coverage. Increasing the capacity for attracting new members and reaching the representative criteria require

dedicated recruiting campaigns and professional organizers, which the vast majority of social partners do not have.

Capacity and mandate to negotiate

Bulgaria

Trade unions have clear mandate to negotiate at national level, but some of the sectoral organisations need more expertise. In general, the sectoral social partners need more support. The trade unions need to increase their membership base, in particular in private services and the new economy.

Croatia

The social partners' capacity and mandate to negotiate are satisfactory but there is room for improvement. On the trade union side, there is a fragmentation of organisations. Due to this fragmentation, the trade unions sometimes avoid building direct relations with the employers. Instead, they often rely on the government searching for the legislative solutions to issues that normally should be addressed by collective bargaining at bipartite level: this approach discourages membership.

Czechia

In the pandemic and post-pandemic era, a strong mandate to negotiate are important elements of the capacity of both social partners.

Latvia

The effectiveness of social dialogue is connected to the mandate to negotiate, which in turn impacts membership and representativeness.

Lithuania

Both national and sectoral employer organisations argue that the main reason why they abstain from sectoral or cross-sectoral collective bargaining is that their affiliates do not give them the mandate to bargain on their behalf. The existence of such a mandate could significantly boost collective bargaining in Lithuania.

Financial and human resources

Bulgaria

The sectoral trade unions are also in dire need for more human and financial resources.

Croatia

The Croatian Employer's Association assesses its own capabilities as satisfactory (around 50 employees, three regional offices and one central office), stating that they are able to cover all the necessary activities related to social dialogue, although there is a need for further education and specialization.

Czechia

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the capacity needs in an important way, especially on the employer side. In spite of the government's support measures an increasing number of businesses

are going bankrupt (especially in the HORECA and tourism sectors), which affects the peak-level and sectoral employer organisations and their overall financial capacity via lower membership fees. This situation threatens the capacity of peak-level and sectoral employer organisations: with lower financial resources and without skilled staff they are not able to participate effectively in policy-making processes at any level (European, national, sectoral). The decreasing number of members is also impacting on the structural capacity of the trade unions, in particular the financial resources at sectoral level. In the pandemic and post-pandemic era, financial resources are important for the capacity of both social partners.

Estonia

Both social partners need more resources in terms of staff and finances, which is especially true for the trade unions. As they lack personnel and financial resources, their capacity to strengthen their negotiation skills, to organise recruitment campaigns, to co-draft legislation at national and EU levels and to conceive and implement projects is rather low. As a consequence, the social partners have to prioritise their involvement, since the confederations are accountable to their affiliates expecting them to focus on issues most crucial to them.

Hungary

Experts generally mention a better access to financial resources as the main pre-condition for improving the effectiveness and increasing the structural capacity of the social partners at all three levels (cross-sector, sectoral and company). The availability of financial resources is also the precondition for better access to expertise.

Cross-sectoral level social dialogue on labour market issues and employment conditions is hindered by the fact that there is no Ministry of Labour with permanent and experienced negotiators having the needed competencies and mandate (MÁV). Several employer organisations work with very few staff (including voluntary workers), and sometimes without a clear vision of their task. In some organisations, when people take part in training, there is nobody in the office, or staff is prevented from attending trainings because they cannot take time off from work (VOSZ).

There is a particular need to move at sectoral level (ÉSZT). The Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees are financed by the government, currently from very limited resources and for limited purposes. According to the 2020 budget, HUF 73.5 million (around €210,000) are earmarked to support the programmes of the 21 Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees. Thus, although social partners and the institutional framework exist at sectoral level, joint actions and lobbying are difficult.

Well-functioning employers organisations, prepared to engage in industry-level collective bargaining are rare. The sectoral organisations are weak, and even more understaffed than sectoral trade union federations. Better access to expertise is needed, and a full sectoral strategy on basis of a multidisciplinary approach should be prepared. Sectoral social dialogue is not able to finance itself, since the current budget is a small part of what the social partners received in the past (MKSZ).

Collective bargaining is taking primarily place primarily at company level. Yet, the negotiation capacities of the two sides of industry are not equal. The issue is not only one of better negotiation skills of management, but also one of the worker representatives' access to important information and technical knowledge (e.g. balance sheets) or, access to sufficient financial resources to hire highly skilled experts in the field.

Latvia

As long as membership is the main financial resource for the social partners, both are inextricably linked. Low funding hampers the ability of both sides of industry to work in a more efficient way.

Both social partners argue that the existing staff is not sufficient. EU and other international funding is helpful in increasing the financial resources as well the capacity of social partners. Yet, the acquisition of these funds requires additional human resources or puts additional burden on existing staff.

Expertise is necessary to enable the social partners to participate in policy making processes. Expertise is organised internally or by contracting research service from outside. Whatever model is chosen, this requires additional resources and cannot be covered by internal funding and staff. Both social partners have indicated the need for expertise at cross-sector level.

The national social partners organise fora for discussion on topical issues. These fora are organised jointly by LBAS and LDDK, or separately, but always with the participation of the other side of industry. Such fora are held on different issues – tax reforms, state budget, etc. However, social partners are not able to run and maintain permanent thematic groups. At best, they are able to appoint a specialist who is responsible for a large spectrum of issues. Analytical and research work depends on external financing. The importance of additional funds may be illustrated by a single example. The LDDK was able to produce a working conditions and risks survey for two years on the basis of EU funding, but could not continue this exercise once this funding had expired.

Lithuania

The lack of human resources is one of the most important shortages often mentioned both by employer organisations and trade unions. Without sufficient resources, both parties are often unable to properly prepare for collective bargaining processes, and, henceforth, lack the capacity to properly represent the interests of their members.

Slovenia

The need for better financial resources has been highlighted by both unions and employers. The financing of social dialogue is not regulated, so trade unions and employers finance it from their own limited resources (membership fees, registration fees from events, project funds, etc.). The main employers association for small business, the Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia, pointed out that in the previous EU Financial Perspective 2014-2020 funds were available to co-fund the strengthening of social dialogue and partners, but there were uncertainty about similar funds in new Financial perspective 2021-2027.

The lack of resources weakens the quality of social dialogue. Due to the lack of funds, it is not possible to hire additional necessary experts. As a result, the same people cover different areas of expertise, which is often very demanding in terms of time availability and in-depth knowledge on specific topic, and at the same time leads to a heavy workload. Better financial resources would enable greater professionalization, enabling the engagement of experts in all necessary fields (analytics, IT, law, etc.).

Spain

The new law on institutional participation should be accompanied with the necessary resources in order to carry out the social partners' tasks more effectively. This should include the staffing of groups of experts with the required analytical and technical skills.

Trade unions and employers organisations claim that their tasks in collective bargaining puts a strong burden on their organisations. At cross-sectoral level, the role of social partners in social dialogue and their institutionalised participation in bi-partite and tripartite bodies in which they represent the vast majority of workers and employers, requires additional resources. At sectoral level, the automatic extension of collective agreements endows trade unions with the capacity to regulate working conditions of the large majority of workers, but has a negative impact on membership and increases the need for external funding. Whilst in the case of employers the critical issue is understaffing, in the case of trade unions the main problem is the lack of analytical skills.

Skills

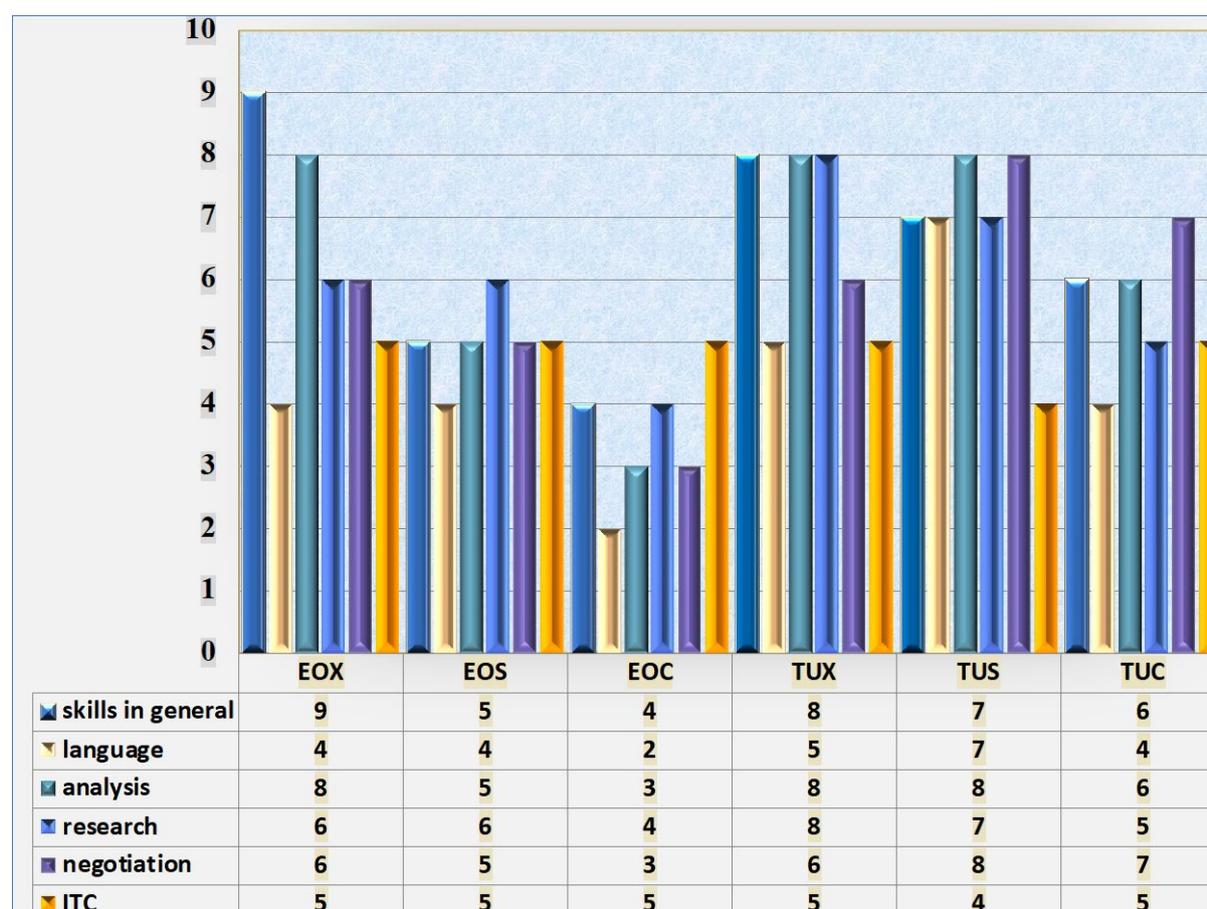
Table 4: skill needs

Capacity needs	Employers			Trade unions		
	cross-sector	sector	company	cross-sector	sector	company
IV. Skills						
skills in general	BG, CZ, HU, LT, LV, PL, RO, SI, SK(R)	BG, CZ, LT, LV, RO	BG, EL, HU, LT	BG, CZ, HU, LT, LV, PL, RO, SK(X)	BG, CZ, HU, LT, LV, RO, SK(X)	BG, EL, LT, LV, RO, SK(XS)
language skills for EU level	BG, HU, PL, SK(R)	BG, EL, HU, LV	BG, EL	BG, HU, LT, LV, SK(XS)	BG, EL, HU, IT, LT, LV, SK(XS)	EL, IT, LT, SK(XS)
analytical skills	BG, CZ, HR, HU, PL, RO, SI, SK(R)	BG, CZ, HU, LV, RO	BG, EL, HR	BG, CZ, HU, LT, LV, RO, SI, SK(X)	BG, CZ, HR, HU, LT, LV, RO, SK(XS)	EL, HR, LT, LV, RO, SK(XS)
research skills	BG, HR, HU, RO, SI, SK(XRI)	BG, HR, HU, LV, RO, SK(X)	BG, EL, HR, SK(X)	BG, HR, HU, LT, LV, RO, SI, SK(X)	BG, HR, HU, LT, LV, RO, SK(XS)	EL, HR, LT, RO, SK(XS)
negotiation skills	BG, CZ, HR, LV, SI, SK(RI)	BG, CZ, HR, LV, RO	BG, EL, HR	BG, CZ, HR, LT, LV, SK(X)	BG, CZ, ES, HR, LT, LV, RO, SK(X)	EL, ES, HR, LT, LV, RO, SK(XS)
numeric / ITC skills	BG, CZ, HR, SI, SK(XR)	BG, CZ, HR, HU, SK(X)	BG, CZ, EL, HR, SK(X)	BG, CZ, HU, SI, SK(X)	BG, CZ, HR, SK(X)	CZ, EL, HR, LV, SK(XS)

Capacity building in relation to improving the skills of the two sides of industry is also high in demand. This holds true both for skills in general (39 nominations), but also for specific skills such as

analysis (38), research (36) and negotiation skills (35). The need for improvement of language skills was the least cited (26).

Graph 5: skill needs¹⁵



Bulgaria

There is a very strong need for skill development of any form on both sides of industry (e.g. research skills). This is particularly the case at the sectoral level of industrial relations.

Croatia

Trade union representatives argue that they do not have enough and adequate skills in general, language skills for EU level negotiations, nor sufficient analytical, research and negotiation skills. Therefore, their capacity to negotiate at national and sectoral levels are in some cases insufficient.

Czechia

Major differences are evident between the various levels of social dialogue. In general, the peak-level organisations on both sides of industry comprise modern institutions with highly-skilled staff. Unfortunately, this cannot be said of the sectoral and company levels, although again, significant differences exist between sectors. The dominant social dialogue level in Czechia is the company

¹⁵ EOX = cross-industry employer organisation, EOS = sectoral employer organisation, EOC = company employer; TUX = cross-industry trade union, TUS = sectoral trade union, TUC = company trade union

level, at which the vast majority of collective bargaining is conducted. While the lack of staff and skills is generally most acute at this level, it is important to note that many employers and trade unions have no ambition to engage in social dialogue at higher levels or to address some of the above mentioned mega-trends. Language and ITC skills are high in demand. A further problem is linked to the ageing of the trade union membership base and their officials, having a negative effect on skills in the organisations, again especially at sectoral and company levels.

Latvia

In sector level organisations the language skills are not sufficient. Better finances would solve many “needs” for capacity building of the social partners: sufficient staff, better access to expertise, forming thematic groups for specific topics, skills, that includes language skills, analytical skills, research skills, negotiation skills, numeric and ITC skills, as well as for measures aimed at raising public awareness for the benefits of social dialogue and the need to improve communication. All of this is stressed by the Latvian social partners.

Poland

The social partners emphasize the need to raise the skill levels of the policy making participants in social dialogue on both sides of industry. In their daily work, the organisations rely largely on their own experts who come from science or are former government or business advisors. They are people with appropriate and solid knowledge in their field. On the other hand, decision makers in organisations, i.e. top or middle management, often do not have the necessary range of skills (language, analytical or research skills) to conduct effective social dialogue. This applies both to the cross-sectoral and sectoral level of industrial relations.

Romania

Very often, support from upper-level organisations, such as federations or cross-sector confederations is required for helping the lower-level organisations. In practice, this is not always possible due to limited time and human resources of the upper-level organisations. Increasing the skills and know how required for a collective bargaining at all levels would have a significant impact on the quality of collective bargaining.

Slovakia

To improve the situation in collective bargaining, it is necessary to improve the personal capacities of trade unions, particularly the skills of trade union negotiators: skills in legal and economic issues are particularly needed. Trade unions normally, built up such capacities at their sectoral trade union federations, but at present, due to the lack of financial resources, the trade unions decrease the number of their negotiators. This development may impact negatively on collective bargaining in companies. Macroeconomic and microeconomic data which is relevant for collective bargaining is also often missing.

Spain

According to trade unions consulted the main problem in relation to their effective engagement in collective bargaining is the lack of negotiation skills. The trade unions pointed out to a generational change, with younger generations without a strong activist or trade union background being appointed as union delegates in works council elections. For this reason, the trade unions are

devoting as many resources as possible to training programmes and have implemented a system of different levels of trade union training.

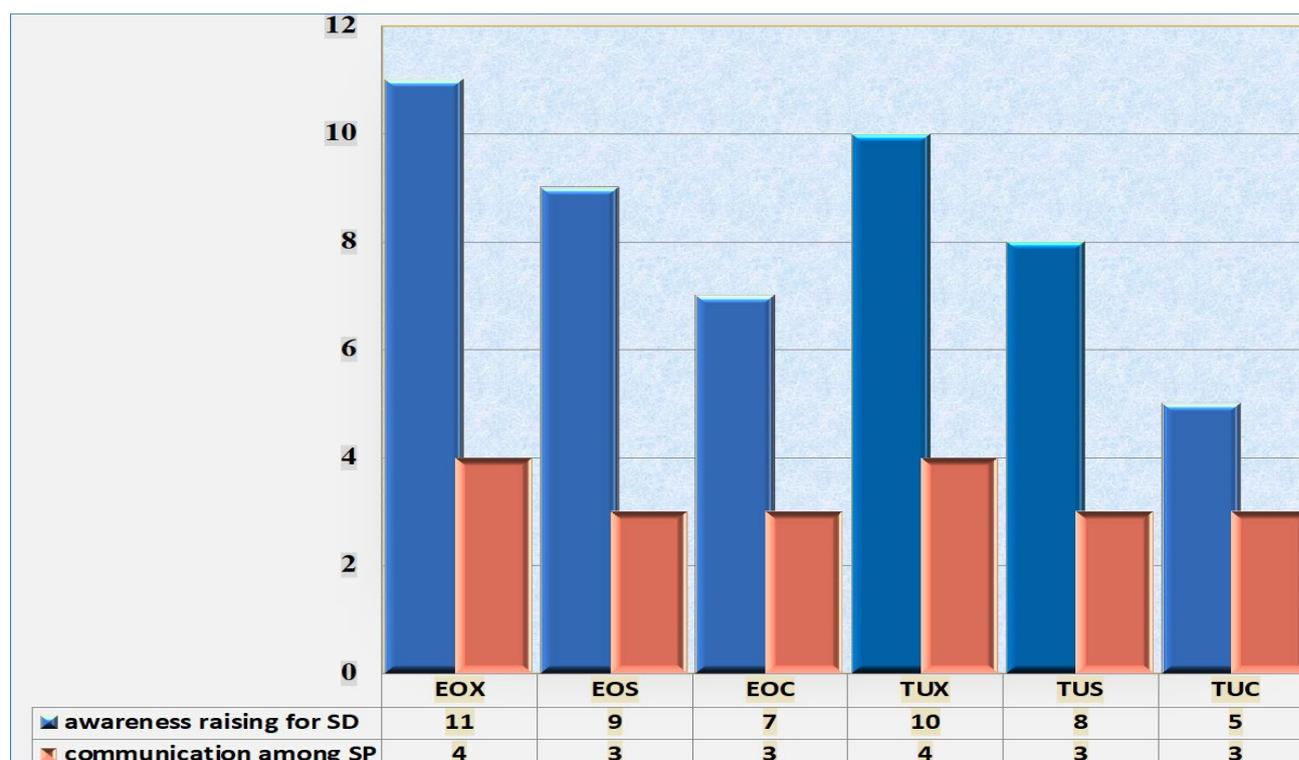
Raising public awareness for the benefits of social dialogue

The previous project (Eurofound, 2020) had identified two accessorial capacity building needs linked to better awareness raising for the benefits of social dialogue among the wider public and to a better communication among the sociampartners themselves.

Table 5: awareness raising and better communication

Capacity needs	Employers			Trade unions		
	cross-sector	sector	company	cross-sector	sector	company
V. Other (e.g.)						
raising public awareness for benefits of social dialogue	BG, CZ, EL, HR, HU ¹⁶ , IT, LT, LV, PL, SI, SK(XR)	BG, CZ, EL, HR, HU, IT, LT, SI, SK(X)	BG, EL, HR, HU, IT, LT, SK(X)	EE, EL, HR, HU, IT, LT, LV, RO, SI, SK(XS)	EE, EL, HR, HU, IT, LT, RO, SK(XS)	EL, HR, IT, LT, SK(XS)
need to improve communication with other social partners	BG, HR, LV, SK(R)	BG, EL, HR	BG, EL, HR	EL, HR, LV, SK(S)	EL, HR, SK(S)	EL, HR, SK(S)

¹⁶ Highest score (5) all levels indicated.

Graph 6: public awareness and communication¹⁷

The current project certainly confirms the former, since the need for more awareness raising received 49 nominations. Improving the communication among the social partners themselves does not seem to be viewed as equally important (20 nominations only).

Hungary

The general public in Hungary knows little of the existence, developments and results of social dialogue. Even at enterprise level, not all workers know whether or not there is a trade union on site and they know very little about its activities. Many employees are unaware of the existence of a valid collective agreement which would benefit to them.

The situation is even worse at sectoral level. This is not only because of a total lack of individual perception, but also due to a lack of information in the mass media. Most of the social networking websites of some organisations (e.g. MKKSZ (Trade Union of Hungarian Civil Servants, Public Employees and Public Servants), KASZ (Trade Union of Commerce Workers) and print or online newsletters of some major federations raise public awareness, but they fail to reach the general public. The importance of a genuine national and sectoral social dialogue is not the focus of the public media.

¹⁷ EOX = cross-industry employer organisation, EOS = sectoral employer organisation, EOC = company employer; TUX = cross-industry trade union, TUS = sectoral trade union, TUC = company trade union

Italy

In the perspective of maintaining or raising membership, initiatives to raise awareness about the benefits of social dialogue at all levels might help to address this issue, which appears to be important for employers associations as well.

Latvia

Measures aimed at raising public awareness for the benefits of social dialogue cannot materialise without proper finances. Improving communication is a long term process that requires not only financial, but also human resources.

Poland

In the opinion of the employers' experts (especially underlined by the Pracodawcy RP confederation), a very important role in enhancing the potential of social dialogue is played by raising the awareness for the benefits of social dialogue. An effective social dialogue is impossible to achieve when a significant part of the society does not know what social dialogue is and what its role is, especially which benefits it may engender. Therefore, any activities promoting the idea of dialogue (e.g. educational programs, campaigns and promotion in the society) can increase this awareness. It is also important to show that each citizen can individually be a beneficiary of social dialogue.

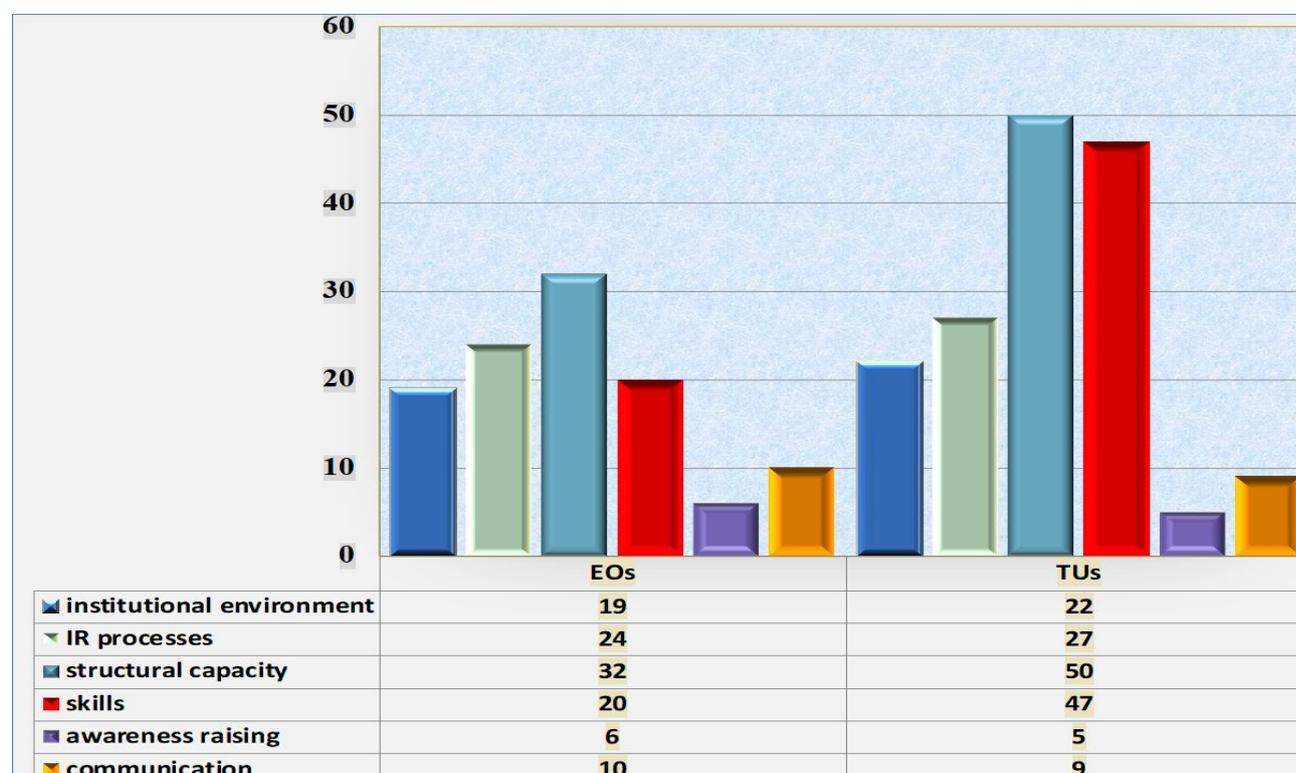
Slovenia

The public is insufficiently aware of the role of the social partners and the benefits of social dialogue. This is a shared opinion of the employers associations and trade unions. The importance of social dialogue and the social partners is only occasionally discussed in public, which does not have the same effect as systematic awareness-raising campaigns on the importance, benefits and achievements of social partnership. Although membership in employer associations and in the trade unions is voluntary, their activities do not only protect the interests of their members, but also benefit to a much broader group of employers and employees. With stable systemic financing, employer association and trade unions could also run awareness campaigns, emphasizing the importance of social dialogue and the social partners, which could increase the number of members in trade unions and employers associations and improve the quality of representation.

2. Capacity building: Examples of good practices

The second objective of this working paper is to map examples of good practice which the national social partners have put into place as regards capacity building in the 5 main fields of observation: enabling legal framework, industrial relations processes and advocacy, structural capacity, skills and awareness raising and communication.

Graph 7: examples of good practice



As graphs 7 above shows the majority of activities on the employers' side is clearly focussed on structural capacity initiatives and industrial relations processes. Skills projects and influencing the institutional framework come second and third. The good practices cases sampled on the trade union side are more accentuated with a strong focus on skill related projects and activities around structural capacities. Activities aiming at the industrial relations processes and the institutional environment lag clearly behind. In the following we will map and assess these measures in more detail at country level.

Institutional environment

Table 6: good practice – institutional environment

Examples of good practice	Employers			Trade unions		
	cross-sector	sector	company	cross-sector	sector	company
I. Institutional environment						
enabling legal framework	BG, EL, PL	BG, LT, LV		BG, EL, HU, LT, LV,	BG, HU, LT	
autonomy of the social partners	ES, SI, SK (I) ¹⁸	BG, SK(I)		ES, HU, LV, SI	BG, LV	
supportive role of the state	BG, EE, EL, LV	BG, EE, HU	EE	BG, EE, EL, HU, LV	BG, EE	EE

Greece

The National General Collective Labour Agreement of 2019 was extended, by statutory regulation of the Ministry of Labour, until December 31, 2020. The National General Collective Employment Agreement of 2020 redefined the agreement of the social partners for joint actions, key amongst them being the establishment of an Employees' Occupational Insurance Fund "to form an additional reliable safety net to support employees who are expected to have a greater need for additional income when retiring." The state supports the social partners' activities by integrating them into financing programs and actions aimed at their institutional empowerment.

Lithuania

The new Labour Code enacted in Lithuania on 1 July 2017 stipulated that the provisions of collective agreements should apply only to the members of the signatory trade unions. The national and sectoral trade unions were quick to take advantage of this, as they had regularly concluded sectoral and cross-sectoral collective agreements in the public sector since 2018 and provided certain additional guarantees for their members (e.g. extra leave days, days off or free days for study, health promotion). This approach has activated social dialogue in the public sector and encouraged public sector employees to join trade unions more actively.

Poland

The project conducted by the Confederation Lewiatan: „Monitoring the government's legislative process” needs to be cited. The main objective is to monitor changes in economic law at national level as well as engaging Lewiatan 's members from the earliest stage. The project is co-financed by the European Social Fund.

Another project is implemented by the confederation Pracodawcy RP (Employers of the Republic of Poland) and entitled "Network for monitoring the law of Employers of the Republic of Poland". A group of organizations were monitoring of legal acts relating to entrepreneurship and labour. Every quarter, reports analysing the business regulatory environment and compliance with the principles

¹⁸ I represents the opinion of the **APZ employer organisations**

of proper legislation were prepared. The project was co-financed under the Operational Program Knowledge Education Development 2014-2020, Axis II.

Slovenia

Both employer associations and trade unions recognise the autonomy of the social partners as an example of good practice for capacity building in Slovenia. Article 76 of the Constitution guarantees the freedom to establish, operate, and join trade unions. The same freedoms are rooted in legislation. The legislative framework gives the social partners an appropriate level of autonomy in their organization and operation, emphasizes the role of one of the biggest Confederations, i.e. Pergam. Fifty-one trade unions dispose of a representative status under the Representativeness of Trade Unions Act (1993). Also the employer associations point to the autonomy of the social partners as a feature of good practice. The Chambers of Commerce and Industry Act (adopted in 2006 and last amended in 2011) stipulates that the Chamber an independent, voluntary, interest-based and non-profit association of legal and natural persons engaged in gainful economic market activities. It also stipulates that the Chamber may be granted public authority status.

Spain

Both trade unions and employer organisations pointed out the strength of the bi-partite cross-sectoral social dialogue as an example of good practice of their autonomous role in the governance of industrial relations. The last example in this regard is the Sixth Bi-partite Agreement on Autonomous Resolution of Labour Disputes (ASAC) in November 2020 . According to the trade unions, the agreement provides for a more agile and modern dispute resolution system, with the capacity to align workers' rights with company needs. The agreement provides additional momentum for mediation, conciliation and arbitration mechanisms to have a positive impact on a more effective collective bargaining system.

Industrial relations processes and advocacy

Table 7: good practice – industrial relations processes and advocacy

Examples of good practice	Employers				Trade unions		
	cross-sector	sector	company	other	cross-sector	sector	company
II. Effective engagement in							
social dialogue	BG, CZ, EL, LT, LV	BG, HU	HU	LT	BG, CZ, EL, HR ¹⁹ , HU, LT, LV, PL	BG, HU	
collective bargaining	BG	BG, HU			BG, ES	BG, HU, RO	HU, RO
(co) regulating the employment relationship	BG, EE, EL	BG, EE	EE, SK(I)		BG, EE, EL	BG, EE	EE
tripartite and bipartite consultations	CZ, EE, SI				CZ, EE		
influencing public policy via advocacy	CZ, SI				CZ, HR		

Czechia

The involvement of the social partners in the European Semester and National Reform Programmes can be also considered as an example of good practice, as well as their involvement in designing the COVID-19 relief measures (especially the employment retention programme and financial support schemes for employers). The cooperation in the field of safety and health at work during the COVID-19 pandemic is also appreciated by the social partners at all levels.

Estonia

In May 2018, the Estonian government and social partners re-established tripartite social dialogue. The last tripartite meeting took place more than a decade ago in 2002. The Estonian Trade Union Confederation, the Estonian Employers' Confederation, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Health and labour and the Minister of Interior participated in the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss topics most important to each side, for example the development of workplace democracy and the issues of foreign workforce. It was agreed that such meetings should take place several times per year. During the recession and pandemic this year, this has also been crucial for finding optimal interventions, including designing the furlough scheme and sickness benefit scheme.

Greece

The development of tripartite social dialogue was the subject of activity for the institutional social partners GSEVEE, SEV, ESEE, SETE, and GSEE, in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO). In the context of a joint program, they mapped the current situation and formulated proposals to improve the effectiveness of social dialogue. The project focused on four

¹⁹ New web page by UATUC Decent Work.

thematic areas of interest: 1. Social dialogue structures at the national level; 2. Tripartite social dialogue at the sectoral level; 3. Social dialogue on vocational education and training issues with an emphasis on apprenticeship; 4. Social dialogue on issues of discrimination in the labour market.

Lithuania

The Tripartite Council of the Republic of Lithuania, composed of the representatives of trade unions, employer organisations and the government, continues to be the main forum for social dialogue in Lithuania. During 2020, the social partners in the Tripartite Council discussed minimum wage increases under COVID-19 conditions and the issues of the proposed EU minimum wage, the support for business affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and a number of other issues relevant for the social partners. The participation of the social partners in the Tripartite Council meetings is a good opportunity to express their opinions and to find solutions to the problems most appropriate for all parties.

Poland

NSZZ "Solidarność" implemented the project "Schemes of Social Dialogue for Decent Work in the public sector at the level of local governments". The overall goal of the project is to improve the quality of social dialogue in the public sector at the level of local government in Poland. The specific goal of the project is to develop good practices of dialogue between local government authorities and trade unions representing employees of companies providing services of general interest for local governments.

NSZZ "Solidarność" also ran the project "Initiating actions implementing the Autonomous Framework Agreement of European Social Partners on Active Aging and the Intergenerational Approach". The main goals of the project are:

1. Create conditions for the implementation at national levels of the "Autonomous Framework Agreement of the European Social Partners on Active Aging and the Intergenerational Approach" by developing national action plans and the analyses of the current state of affairs, and developing a catalogue of good practices and recommendations during the project.
2. Increasing the knowledge of the social partners in improving working conditions in the context of extending working life and promoting the content of the "Autonomous Framework Agreement of the European Social Partners on Active Aging and the Intergenerational Approach" through training and promotion activities. The project is co-financed from the resources of the budget line of the European Commission: Social Dialogue.

Structural capacity

Table 8: good practice – structural capacity

Examples of good practice	Employers			Trade unions		
	cross-sector	sector	company	cross-sector	sector	company
III. structural capacity						
long-term comprehensive support of the actors	BG, CZ, EL, SK(I)	BG, CZ		BG, CZ, EL, HR ²⁰ , HU	BG, CZ, HR ²¹ , HU	
increase membership / representativeness	EE, PL	EE	EE	BG, EE, ES, SK(X) ²²	BG, EE, HR ²³ , HU, PL, RO	EE, RO
stronger capacity / mandate to negotiate	CZ, LV, SI	CZ		BG, HU, LV, SI	BG, HR ²⁴	
better financial resources		HU	HU	HU, SK(X)	RO,	RO,
sufficient staff	BG, EL,	BG, HU		BG, EL, HU, LV, SK(X)	BG,	
better access to expertise	BG, CZ, EL, SI	BG, CZ		BG, CZ, EL, HU, LV, SK(X)	BG, CZ, RO	RO
forming thematic groups for specific topics (e.g. EU semester)	CZ, PL, SI,	CZ, SK(I)		CZ, PL	CZ	

Bulgaria

Some recent projects identified as being of good practice in increasing the capacity of the social partners are the following.

The STRONG-project (Sustainable social policy ThROugh capacity strengtzeniNG) of 2020. The project is implemented by the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) in partnership with NHO (Confederation of Employers in Norway) and NBBG (Norwegian-Bulgarian Business Group). The STRONG-project is a continuation of BCCI's efforts to strengthen social dialogue policies and practices in Bulgaria, to improve tripartite dialogue at national, regional and local levels, and to stimulate bilateral cooperation with Norway by sharing experiences, knowledge and good practice.

²⁰ There was significant help of ETUC in the support of trade unions in Croatia.

²¹ EDUCA.

²² X represents the opinion of the **largest employers'** and **trade union** organisations **AZZZ SR** and **KOZ SR**.

²³ Database for collective agreements <http://www.kolektivni-ugovori.info>.

²⁴ New web page by UATUC on Decent Work.

The GOOD WOOD-project of the BCCI, in cooperation with LC Podkrepa, for strengthening the social dialogue and the reorganization of production and management in the logging and wood processing sector. The emphasis is on social dialogue and its new dimensions with a view to the circular bioeconomy.

The project "Review of social dialogue in the construction sector in the South-East region (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary and Slovenia) confirmed that the social partners in these countries need support in the following areas:

- dissemination, promotion, monitoring and evaluation of the activities and results of the European social dialogue, e.g. through European or national events, peer training or reviews, studies and publications;
- improving the coordination, functioning and effectiveness of the European social dialogue, through the identification and development of joint approaches by social dialogue committees, such as the exchange of good practices and joint training events.

The project "Improving the adaptability of employees and strengthening collective bargaining through joint actions of the social partners at national, sectoral and sectoral levels" is funded by the Operational Program "Human Resources Development" and co-financed by the European Social Fund. The start of the project was on 01.09.2019 and will end on 01.03.2022. It is carried out by the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in Bulgaria (CITUB) in partnership with the Confederation of Employers and Industrialists in Bulgaria (CEIBG), the Bulgarian Industrial Association (BIA) and the Bulgarian Industrial Capital Association (BICA).

Croatia

The Union of Autonomous Trade Unions of Croatia UATUC (SSSH) is very active in organising various educational programmes, like EDUCA. Some affiliated trade unions (Trade union of Construction Industry of Croatia and Autonomous Trade Union of Catering and Tourism together with Croatian Employers' Association) ran the project 'With social dialogue to quality working places in construction and tourism'. They launched a new website Decent work (<https://radpomjeri.eu/>) to inform workers about their rights and benefits from union membership. The website is created as part of the EU project 'Together we are stronger'.

The Independent Trade Unions of Croatia provides very useful information on collective and individual mediation procedures on their web page. The Association of Croatian Trade Unions (MATICA) published two valuable books on 'Remuneration in public sector' and 'Challenges of demographic changes and the 4th industrial revolution'. The publication were prepared as a part of the EU Project „Contribution of tripartite social dialogue – the perspective of the labour market” financed from the European Social Fund.

Czechia

Since 2008 several projects supported by the European Social Fund and national sources were been implemented by the peak level social partners in the field of structural capacity. The first set of projects focused on further education of the social partners in various areas (legislation, IT skills, communication skills, etc.). The projects were conducted in from 2015 to 2020 and focused on the strengthening of the capacities of the social partners in areas other than human resources (e.g. Industry 4.0, Society 4.0, Work 4.0, digitalisation, robotisation, etc.).

Estonia

In 2020, the Estonian Trade Union Confederation (EAKL) and its members organised a trade union recruitment campaign. The aim was to encourage workers to join trade unions in order to improve work places instead of employees changing jobs due to poor working conditions. The campaigns also showed to employers that trade unions in a company are not a threat, but rather an opportunity to create a working environment inciting employees to stay and contributing to the company. Although the membership did not increase to the expected extent, the information flow was extensive and it helped building awareness. EAKL has organised such events for several years now.

Another example of good practice was the signing of the good practice agreement in 2018 on the extension of collective agreements setting representativeness criteria for social partners. Currently, there are no official representativeness criteria for the social partners in place. According to the Collective Agreements Act, collective agreements can be extended with regard to wages, working time and rest time conditions in case of any multi-employer agreement. According to the good practice agreement, however, only the multi-employer agreements concluded between the most representative social partners should be extended. The most representative social partners are those with the highest number of members, and, in case of similar membership levels, the organisation being a member of EAKL or ETKL will be considered the most representative. The extended collective agreement cannot cover more than one sector of field of activity. The good practice agreement is not officially binding, but the national level social partners hope that it will be adhered to. Currently, the government and social partners are drafting a regulation that clarifies representativeness criteria in collective bargaining.

In 2019, the Members of Parliament founded a trade union support group. The aim of which is to support the trade union movement and protect the interests of Estonian employees in the legislative process. This initiative was initiated by the Members of Parliament and increases the cooperation with social partners and improves the social dialogue in general. It also helps in motivate the government and the Minister of Social Affairs to pay the necessary attention to social issues crucial to the trade unions.

Greece

The social partners developed intense research and study work on the economy and the labour market. The research institutes of the social partners actively contribute to the public debate with their expertise. They strengthen their members and improve their bargaining power by providing them with data, information, analyses, and documentation. Almost all of these activities of the social partners are part of European funded programs.

The SEV publishes a monthly “Bulletin for the Greek economy” and Special Reports on the future of work and other labour market issues. During the first wave of the pandemic, the SEV issued practical guides on teleworking and the continuation of business operations.

The GSEE, through its Labour Institute (INE GSEE), publishes the annual and interim reports on the Greek economy and employment, as well as quarterly reports of economic developments and studies on various topics. Since 2013, the Labour Institute of the GSEE has developed a specialized Information and Counselling Network for employees and unemployed at national level.

The GSEVEE, through a network of activities and actions, aims to promote its institutional role, strengthen its local and sectoral federations and associations, as well as their modernisation and operational empowerment. The ESEE also publishes an annual trade report, prepares studies, and develops training activities for its members.

Latvia

The European Social Fund supported the activity “Strengthening the Administrative Capacity of the social partners” which was implemented via two projects: “Strengthening the Administrative Capacity of the “Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia”” and “Strengthening the Administrative Capacity of the “Latvian Employers’ Confederation””. Both projects were implemented from January 2009 until June 2015. The aim of the projects was to promote the development of social dialogue at the regional level, as well as to strengthen LBAS and LDDK as social partners. As a result the following results were achieved: 1) the development of bilateral and tripartite social dialogue at national and regional level; 2) the analysis of regulatory enactments and policy documents were carried out in two areas: European Union regulatory enactments and policy documents; and social and labour market development; 3) social dialogue in the regions was strengthened by creating regional co-ordinators, publishing printed methodological materials, organizing seminars, as well as implementing public information and communication activities. A twin project “Strengthening the Administrative Capacity of the “Latvian Employers’ Confederation”” was implemented for LDDK.

The European Social Fund project “Improvement of Practical Implementation and Monitoring of Safety and Health Legislation” was implemented by the State Labour Inspectorate. One of the activities was the setting-up labour dispute resolution mechanisms by LBAS and LDDK. The purpose was to improve the effectiveness of labour dispute resolution in order to protect the rights and interests of both workers and employers. This project strengthened LBAS’ capacity as an expert in labour rights.

The project implemented by the State Employment Agency (NVA) in cooperation with LBAS and LDDK “Support for longer working life” started on 1 January 2017 and is running until 31 December 2022. The aim of the project is to promote the work and employment capacity of older workers. The project aims to provide support to 3,000 older workers and to ensure that employers include age management issues in their employment contracts, collective agreements or other employment related documents. The social partners support collective bargaining aimed at concluding collective agreement to improve employment and working conditions of senior workers.

LBAS is also a partner in the project funded by the European Commission’s “Initiating of activities for implementation of the Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-Generational Approach”. The was started in January 2019 and ran until December 2020. It is based on the Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-Generational Approach signed on 8 March 2017 by the European Social Partners. The activities were focused on the four most important areas of the social partners’ activities: strategic assessment of workforce demography; health and safety at the workplace; skills and competence management; and work organisation for healthy and productive working lives.

In 2017, the Latvian social partners started the implementation of an ESF co-funded project “Development of Social Dialogue to Improve the Business Support Regulation” with the support of the government. The goal of the project is to ensure the development of bilateral sector level social

dialogue and develop s better legal framework for improvement of business environment. This pilot project is aimed at developing sector level collective bargaining. By 2022 five general sector level agreements should come into force., therefore, its successful outcomes serve the interests of all social partners - employers, workers and government. LBAS and LDDK analysed the obstacles to sector level collective bargaining in Latvia and drafted several amendments to the Labour code, including thresholds for erga omnes extensions, the co-signing of collective agreements, and a derogation clause for remuneration of overtime work. As a result of project activities, three sector level collective agreements were signed (two of them are made valid) that establish minimum wage in the following sectors: construction sector (2019); glass fibre production (2019) and hospitality (2020).

Poland

The member organizations of the Social Dialogue Council (RDS - tripartite consultative body at the national level) created a bilateral social partners' working group to deal with implementation the results of the European social dialogue and to prepare information and recommendations for the RDS regarding the European Semester documents. The group meets regularly. The meetings are financed from the RDS budget.

The Federation of Polish Entrepreneurs (FPP), together with OPZZ and the Confederation of Norwegian Entrepreneurship (NHO), runs the project MIGRIGHT: Improving social dialogue for decent work of migrants and refugees in Poland. It is to increase the ability of social partners to participate in tripartite and bilateral social dialogue in Poland, through the transfer of best practices and training in supporting the rights of migrant workers and refugees and ensuring decent working conditions for this group of workers. The project is co-financed by the Norwegian Funds 2014-2021, as part of the "Social Dialogue - Decent Work" program.

The Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers (ZPP) has created the Dobry.Biz platform, which is an interesting example of activities aimed at recruiting new members. ZPP is a new representative organization of employers, which appears to be very active and strives to constantly expand its membership base. The platform provides extensive expert support for members of the organization. The project is implemented with ZPP's own funds.

The Metalworkers' Secretariat of NSZZ "Solidarność" is currently running the project "Employment of foreigners and work in a multicultural environment - new areas of social dialogue. The project will be implemented from January 2020 to April 2022. The main reason for undertaking this project is the relatively new phenomenon of numerous groups of foreigners in Polish workplaces in the metal industry and the belief that this new situation should be the subject of social dialogue. The aim of the project is to increase the potential of trade union activists to introduce issues related to the employment of immigrants and work in a multicultural environment of social dialogue. This includes the ability of transferring knowledge from other countries, and to formulate solutions acceptable to social partners. Ultimately, the main objective by targeting this group of workers is to increase the level of unionization. The Norwegian headquarters of the Fellesforbundet is the project partner. The project is co-financed by the Innovation Norway grant.

Romania

Changes in the legislation of 2011 impacted on social dialogue in the banking sector. The new legal arrangements redefined the economic sectors according to the NACE codes, which implied that

collective bargaining in banking could not be separated from collective bargaining in the entire financial sector. This posed a serious problem to collective bargaining at sectoral level, since insurance and auxiliary services had a low trade union density. The banking sector was much more unionised, but this could not compensate for the low membership in the entire sector.

Against this background, the Trade Union Federation of Banking and Insurances (FSAB – Federatia Sindicatelor din Asigurari si Banci) in partnership and with the financial support of UNI Global Union initiated a massive organising and recruitment campaign. The goal was to increase membership at both company and sectoral level, which would allow company and the sectoral trade union federation (FSAB) to effectively engage in collective bargaining.

The first stage of the campaign took place between 2013-2014 and focused on increasing the membership and reaching the legal representativeness criteria in two companies - Allianz Tiriac Asigurari and Unicredit Bank. As a result, union membership increased by 71% and respectively 46% in both targeted companies. The trade union organisations established at company level reached the representativeness threshold (minimum 50%), and were able to successfully engage in collective bargaining at company level. The sectoral trade union federation, FASB, increased its membership in the sector by 3%.

In the second stage of the campaign (2016-2017), the aim was to increase trade union density in one company (BRD-Societe Generale) and to help the company union reach the legal representativeness criteria. Following the campaign, the union membership in the company increased by 11%, which was enough for the trade union to become representative and to engage in collective bargaining. FASB has increased its membership in the sector by 4%. In 2016 FASB also became legally representative for the banking and financial activities sector by reaching the legal threshold of 7%.

The third stage of the organizing campaign took place between 2017 and 2019 and targeted numerous company trade unions (in companies such as Raiffeisen, BankPost, BCR, BRD-Société générale, etc.). Following the campaign, at the end of 2019 sectoral trade union density increased by 19% compared to 2013, and FASB had a membership of 10% of the workforce in the sector.

Following the organizing campaign, the institutional capacity of the sectoral trade union was improved. 47 trade unions leaders from the banking and financial activities sector were trained and acquired new skills in recruiting and organizing techniques. A team of seven trade union leaders were intensively trained in negotiation and collective bargaining strategies.

The efforts culminated with the concluding for the first multi-employer collective agreement in the banking and financial activities sector in 2019. The collective agreement was not extended to the sectoral level, because the signatory parties did not fulfil the legal criterion of a minimum 50% membership of the sectoral workforce. However, the collective agreement covers the employees of some of the biggest companies in the sector.

Starting in 2017, Sindicatul IT Timisoara (SIIT -Timisoara IT Trade Union) carried out an organising campaign in the IT sector. The campaign was designed, implemented with UNI Global Union and financed by the latter. The aim of the campaign was to increase sectoral membership to reach the legal threshold of representativeness (7%) which allows initiating sectoral collective bargaining.

The organising campaign targeted several multinational companies active in Romania (e.g. Atos, Honeywell, DXC Technologies, Printec Group, Tech Mahindra). In each company, SITT became representative at company level (50%+1) and collective bargaining followed. Collective agreements were concluded in all unionized companies. More than 4000 employees have been unionized since the start of the campaign. Although many companies were unionized, sectoral representativeness has not been achieved yet, but the campaign is on-going.

During the campaign, the structural capacity of the trade union has been significantly increased. Until 2017, SITT was a territorial trade union, based in one city only (Timisoara). After three years of recruitment and organizing, SITT created new centres in other four major cities of Romania (Brasov, Iasi, Cluj, Bucharest). From a local trade union, SITT turned into a national one. This quantitative increase in membership was also accompanied by a qualitative leap. Through their training active trade union members acquired new skills, which in turn increased the SITT capacity in recruiting, mobilising and collective bargaining.

Skills

Table 9: good practice – skills

Examples of good practice	Employers			Trade unions			
	cross-sector	sector	company	cross-sector	sector	company	other
IV. Skills							
skills in general	BG, CZ, HR ²⁵ , LV, PL, SI, SK(X)	BG, CZ, LV, SK(X)	HU, SK(XI)	BG, CZ, SI,	BG, CZ, HR ²⁶ , HU, LV, RO	RO	LV
language skills	BG, SI, SK(X)	BG, SK(X)	SK(X)	BG, HU	BG,		
analytical skills	BG, CZ, SK(X)	BG, CZ, SK(X)	SK(X)	BG	BG, HU, LV,		LV
research skills				BG,	BG, LV,		LV
negotiation skills	BG, CZ, EL, SK(X)	BG, CZ, SK(X)	SK(X)	BG, CZ, EL, HU, LV, SI,	BG, CZ, HU, LV, RO	HU, LV, RO	LV
numeric / ITC skills	BG, CZ	BG, CZ	BG, CZ	BG,CZ, HU	BG, CZ		
soft skills	BG	BG		BG	BG, LV,		LV

Croatia

The Croatian Employers' Association launched a mentoring programme for business women with the potential to advance in their professional careers, take leading positions in companies and for entrepreneurs wanting to broaden their knowledge. One of the important themes has been the role of social dialogue and how to improve collective bargaining. The mentors will help the mentored businesswomen enrich their professional knowledge and skills, identify clearer career goals and learn how to achieve professional autonomy and take responsibility.

Estonia

Since a long time, both national level social partners have been carrying out cooperation projects with the aim of increasing their capacity or of training other parties (i.e. company level employee representatives ('employee trustees')). This willingness to cooperate is crucial to increase the dialogue capacity of the social partners.

Both national level social partners hold conferences and seminars. The Employers' Confederation has targeted their conferences at a range of stakeholders covering to topics of employment, working conditions and employment relations while every year focussing on more urgent issues. The Trade Union Confederation holds annual strategic seminars, in which they discuss the most relevant topics

²⁵ A mentoring programme for business women.

²⁶ EDUCA – New system of trade union training, <http://www.sssh.hr/hr/projekti>.

with their members and agree on the negotiation strategy for the coming year. The strategic seminars empowered social dialogue also during the pandemic. The trade unions held strategic seminars on occupational health and safety to improve safety, wellbeing and employment during the pandemic.

Hungary

Two GINOP (Operative Programme for the Development of Economy and Innovation) projects were designed and implemented by the sectoral level social partners in light industry. Both projects contributed to the increase of knowledge of the staff and representatives on the trade unions and employers' side at sectoral and company levels.

The recently-closed GINOP-5.3.4-16-2016-00010 was carried out by two employer organisations: the sectoral-level MKSZ (Association of Hungarian Light Industry, acting in the field of textile, clothing, leather and shoe industry) and the cross-sectoral level MGYOSZ (Confederation of Hungarian Employers and Industrialists). The sectoral-level trade union federation, BDSZ (Trade Union of Mine, Energy and Industry Workers), covering - among others - textile, garment and shoe industry workers, was also involved. Within the project, special knowledge is developed and disseminated on specific health and safety issues in the textile, clothing, leather and shoe industry. A high-quality and gap-filling handbook for training on health and safety was developed focussing on the specificities of the sector. It is a good example for social partners' actions in a very concrete field of joint interest. These tasks are financed partly by the European Social Fund and partly by the Hungarian government.

The other ongoing project, the GINOP 5.3.5-18-2018-00048 in the light industry, is carried out by the sectoral organisations MKSZ and BDSZ, but also involving company-level social partners. This project tries to fill the gap on research in the field of development of labour market adaptability and sustainability in the garment industry and identifies social partners' duties and opportunities to move towards a sustainable and circular economic model. The other aim of the project is to increase the coverage of collective agreements in the sector as well as the representativeness of the actors. The outputs of the project are to strengthen social dialogue and contribute to capacity building and development of the actors. The project includes direct elements to develop the social partners' capacity for training of staff and elected. An interactive on-line platform is created for the joint use of the employers' and employees' side, giving the possibility of direct (online) consultation. This is financed partly by the European Social Fund and partly by the Hungarian government.

As a real success story of the previous TÁMOP project cycle, 'Jogpont' offices (Legal points) in six Hungarian regions were established in since 2009. The information points are operated by the social partners offering free legal advice for workers (union members) on labour law, social security or tax issues. These projects were financed by the European Social Fund and the Hungarian government.

Poland

Pracodawcy RP implemented a project to increase key competences in the area of language and digital competences. The project was addressed to 880 people aged 25 and older (including people with disabilities) who were interested in acquiring or improving digital or language skills. The project was implemented in partnership with the local government Agency for Mazowsze S.A., co-financed by the European Union from the European Social Fund under the Masovian Regional Operational Program for 2014-2020.

The Confederation Lewiatan presented a proposal to create a Competence and Qualifications Improvement Fund (FPKiK) at employers' level, financed from a part of contributions paid to the Labour Fund and from the employers' own contribution. The initiative was supported by all trade unions and employer organizations represented in the Social Dialogue Council. The aim of this initiative is to create a mechanism that will support employees in a process of continuous learning in the workplace in a stable and predictable manner.

Slovakia

The new National project Centre for social dialogue II started in June 2016. The goal of the project was the enhancement and development of the skills of the social partners in collective bargaining and in social dialogue at all levels. The project is supported by the state and is implemented by Implementation Agency of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic from 1 June 2016 to 31 July 2021. The target group are trade unions (KOZ SR) and employers (AZZZ SR, RUZ SR, ZMOS). The project is supported by the European Social Fund and the Operational Programme Human Resources of the European Regional Development Fund.

Another capacity-building project is the national project 'Support to the quality of social dialogue'. The goal of the project is to professionalise social dialogue and to improve the quality and effectiveness of the preparation of legislation at tripartite level. Another focus will be on contextual issues of legislation, e.g. the improvement of competitiveness and strengthening of social peace. At the same time, the professional capacities of the social partners shall be reinforced by better access to expertise and further education. The target group are trade unions (KOZ SR) and employers (AZZZ SR, RUZ SR, ZMOS, APZ). The project is supported by the state and is implemented by Implementation Agency of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family from 1 July 2018 to 28 February 2023.

Slovenia

The qualifications and professionalism of the social partners are at a fairly high level despite limited financial resources. The acquisition of skills needed is partly co-financed from the European Social Fund. One of the projects co-financed by the Republic of Slovenia and the European Social Fund is the project "Strengthening social dialogue", which has been implemented since December 2017 by the Association of Free Trade Unions of Slovenia (ZSSS) in partnership with the Association of Employers of Slovenia (ZDS). The main goals of the project are the strengthening the capacity of ZSSS members for a more effective participation in social dialogue with an emphasis on knowledge and enforcement of labour rights, strengthening their basic and professional competencies and increasing knowledge in the field of occupational health.

Spain

According to the trade unions, the main problem in relation to their effective engagement in collective bargaining is a problem of lack of negotiation skills. This issue arises out to a generational change, with younger generations without a strong trade union background being appointed as delegates in works councils elections. For this reason, trade unions are devoting as many resources as possible to training programmes and have implemented a system of levels in trade union training. The CCOO training program includes courses on communication, negotiation, conflict resolution, etc. Recently, the unions created the so-called Escuela del Trabajo, which will offer a master degree in the context of trade union training.

Raising public awareness for the benefits of social dialogue

Table 10: good practice – awareness raising and communication

Examples of good practice	Employers			Trade unions		
	cross-sector	sector	company	cross-sector	sector	company
V. Other (e.g.)						
raising public awareness for benefits of social dialogue	BG, CZ, LV	BG, CZ	HU	BG, CZ, HR ²⁷ , HU, LT		
need to improve communication with other social partners	BG, CZ, HR ²⁸ , SI, SK(X)	BG, CZ, HR, SK(X)	SK(XI)	BG, CZ, ES, HR, HU, SI	BG, CZ, HR	

Finally, as in the previous mapping exercise (2019) raising public awareness for the benefits of social dialogue and improving communication with other social partners were mentioned as examples of good practice when implementing capacity building activities.

Lithuania

The main national trade union confederation – Lithuanian Trade Union Confederation (LPSK) – paid particular attention to awareness raising and increasing the ‘visibility’ of the union through participation in various debates, actions, mass and social media events. In recent years, LPSK went on road shows with a ‘tent’, which was usually set up in the central city squares, providing information on workers’ rights, work organisation, working hours, and other labour law issues. In recent years, affiliated unions have also organised various campaigns and activities. These activities are particularly focused on regional work and the cooperation with NGOs and local media. Another strand of activity is youth work. The main idea of all these events is not only to recruit new members, but also to become more visible and raise public awareness. All these activities have brought positive results and membership in the LPSK has grown in recent years.

Slovenia

Both trade unions and employer associations point out that quality communication between the social partners is one of the key missions of the Economic and Social Council (ESC). The ESC was established in June 1994 and it is organised following the ILO pattern of tripartism, as a tripartite body in which the government plays an active role as the third partner besides employer associations and trade unions. The ESC was founded as the main consultative and coordinative institution for social dialogue in Slovenia and as the most important platform for social dialogue, which has recently been facing certain challenges. Employer associations and trade unions point out that the ESC must fulfil its mission and remain a key platform for the social dialogue - even during the pandemic.

²⁷ A new website on Decent work.

²⁸ [With social dialogue to quality working places in construction and tourism.](#)

Spain

One of the needs that emerged in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic was to ensure better communication between members and non-members and the trade union. According to CCOO, the COVID-19 crisis has accelerated some changes that were already planned. This is the case of the creation of the so-called online counselling centres. The online counselling centres consists of teams of around 5-6 persons who receive calls and provide advice to workers and members. These centres have been opened both at national level, but also in the regional and sectoral federations offices. The teams in these centres are composed of administrative workers, trade unionists and legal experts. The inquiries go first to the administrative workers who depending on the issue will forward it to trade unionists or legal experts. According to CCOO, these online counselling centres have been a real success due to the large amount of requests, but also because they have had a positive impact on membership.

3. Capacity-building needs in the context of current mega-trends and the COVID-19 pandemic

Finally, the Eurofound mapping exercise of capacity building for an effective social dialogue also covered the questions whether current mega-trends (climate change, digitalisation/automation) and/or the COVID-10 pandemic had altered the needs of management and labour. In sum, the needs and challenges arising both from the mega-trends and the COVID-19 pandemic vary – as often – across the member States. Yet, in particular with regard to the capacity building needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic the message from many of the national centres is very clear: the pandemic has not necessarily created new need, but it has accelerated and intensified needs and challenges that had already existed prior to this centennial crisis (EE, EL, LT, PL, RO, SK).

Climate change

Bulgaria

The new climate and digital goals set by the EU also directly affect the members of the social partners in Bulgaria. This new context increases the need to generate, maintain and expand the expertise of the social partners on various new issues, formulate and coordinate positions with their members and take follow-up actions to achieve the objectives.

Croatia

The European Green Deal has the potential for a shift in the mainstream economic paradigm towards a green transition and sustainable development. The required level of adjustment of the workers to the green and digital transformation will be unparalleled. Such complex tasks demands a direct and stronger inclusion of the social partners as well as their cooperation.

Czechia

Mega-trends, especially digitalisation and automation, e-learning, teleworking, new forms of work and climate change are discussed by the social partners at peak, sectoral and company levels. Social dialogue addresses all of these mega-trends, but collective bargaining is more conservative and mega-trends and 'new' topics are hardly ever addressed. The Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions regularly states that the implementation of European Framework agreements, for example, through higher-level national collective agreements is insufficient and calls on member unions to devote greater attention to this topic.

Estonia

Social partnership is crucial for restructuring the economy and for socially just transitions. The topic does not bring along specific new needs, but rather emphasises the need for social partnership. The trade unions have called several times called for allocating the required substantial resources for job creation following the greening of the oil shale sector as well as for life-long learning.

Greece

As for climate change and digitalisation, no tripartite social dialogue was used for the design of these relevant policies to date. The issue of climate change is still in its infancy, both in terms of research and policies carried out by the government and, to a lesser extent, by the social partners.

Latvia

Climate change targets are directly connected to jobs and the 'Just transition' of workers and require the involvement of the social partners. The Latvian climate change policy will mainly focus on housing and business energy efficiency, public transport, as well as the agriculture and forestry sectors. The capacity of the social partners to participate in this 'Just transition process' is crucial to ensure the social protection of the workers and their participation in active labour policies.

Poland

The Polish social partners have not discussed megatrends, and have mainly reacted to government initiatives. There is a lack of proactivity and willingness to come up with their own proposals.

In light of the structural changes awaiting the Polish labour market due to climate and technological change trade union experts (NSZZ "Solidarność") identified the weakness of bilateral collective bargaining, in particular in sectors most exposed to the upcoming transformations, as constituting a fundamental threat to the future social and economic stability.

Romania

The emergence of new trends, such as climate change and digitalisation has exposed the lack of skills and expertise of the social partners in Romania. Especially when it comes to climate change policies or just transition, there is very little knowledge in the field, which impedes the social partners from taking active part in policy shaping. The social partners are not equipped with the know-how and skills to engage in meaningful discussions and negotiations and often do not have sufficient time or resources for in-depth analyses.

Slovakia

According to both sides of industry the social partners do not have sufficient professional capacities in order to cover climate change-related issues. Strengthening their expertise and forming thematic groups for dealing with climate change issues are rated among the most relevant needs. According to the employers, also a more supporting role of the state was mentioned. The trade unions stressed the implementation of European climate convention and the transfer to a low-carbon economy. The transition to green workplaces should also go hand-in-hand with adequate social security and fair employment and working conditions.

Spain

in relation to the mega-trends, trade unions emphasised the importance of analytical skills in their organizations as the best way to ensure effective responses before the challenges they pose to collective bargaining and the labour market.

Digitalisation/automation

Bulgaria

One of the main challenges of industrial relations is related to the digital economy. Some of the most important aspects concern the recruitment and organizing workers in trade unions, especially teleworkers, mobile workers and those employed via on-line platforms.

Croatia

Knežević and Butković (2020) prepared a study on the impact of digitalisation on the commerce sector. As a result of the development of information technologies (e.g. web stores, self-service cash registers, robotic warehouses, artificial intelligence) the growing power of consumers has drastically intensified the competition among trading companies. Due to the strong impact of digitalisation on commerce there is a need for a more active participation of social partners in the change process and for an increase their negotiation capacity.

Estonia

One of the new needs is to figure out how to represent workers in the platform economy. Trade unions have raised concerns regarding the working conditions and social protection of platform workers. Their employment relationship is considered precarious and platform workers lack social protection. However, trade unions have not found solutions to the questions who should and how to represent platform workers.

Greece

The debate on digitalisation has gained more tripartite momentum. The government is trying to introduce digitalisation in many state functions and public services and the social partners are exploring and analysing the possible effects of digitalisation. Measures are taken unilaterally by the government without bi- or tripartite consultations. Recent developments at work, such as the more widespread use of teleworking and its consequences, should also be included in social dialogue and lead to new legislation. The complexity of these new issues and the speed of their developments require in-depth specialized knowledge of all the participants to cope with the new and increased demands for effective interest representation and participation

Hungary

Teleworking has become widespread in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many employers are forced to switch to teleworking arrangements which in turn raises the need for regulation. The new government regulation of 13 November 2020 makes telework more flexible, and employers can offer a tax-free lump sum for costs related to home equipment. Telework also raises a call for proper health and safety arrangements.

Another phenomenon which has become highly relevant due to the COVID-19 pandemic is the issue of platform workers. Hungarian trade unions do not yet organise platform workers. There is a dilemma also as to who platform workers are, and whether or not they are employees in the traditional sense. They are tagged as individual entrepreneurs or self-employed, or sometimes employed in the 'grey' market economy. This raises the question as to who should represent their interests? Although digitalisation in education is not a new issue, it has gained additional momentum

during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the forced introduction of virtual or home-schooling in the spring of 2020.

Latvia

The social partners should ensure that digitalisation and automation is smoothly introduced into the labour market so that it does not harm the workers' employability. In the next programming period of EU funds the social partners see a strong need to develop a training fund on ICT (based on sectoral or enterprise level collective agreements) to promote the participation in lifelong learning and the improvement of digital skills. Digitalisation, automation and the COVID-19 pandemic call for an examination of the compatibility of existing labour law with the new conditions (e.g. working time and conditions).

The social partners have included in their investment priorities for the next ESF funding period the implementation of the autonomous agreement for inclusive labour markets and the promotion of education and skills as part of Future of work Development. This approach includes three directions: youth employment; active ageing and an inter-generational approach; digitalisation in the world of work. Among priorities social partners have indicated digitalisation as a special topic. It includes the following topics and activities: future of work, adaptation to digitalisation, automation and robotization.

Lithuania

The employer organisations are very focused on the current mega-trends (climate change, digitalisation/automation), as businesses face new challenges in making day-to-day decisions. The main employer organisation – LPK – regularly organises conferences and discussions on Industry 4.0 and innovation management issues, participates in various climate change, energy development, and other working groups. The trade unions also try to raise attention to these emerging new issues (e.g. platform work), but admit that they do not have sufficient human resources to do so efficiently.

Romania

As regards digitalisation, there is a rather limited capacity of the trade unions when it comes to influencing employers' strategic decision-making and anticipating medium-term implications. This, again, has to do with the lack of expertise in the area, but also with a weak capacity in terms of negotiation skills and mobilisation strategy. One can conclude that the newly emerging mega trends have just accentuated previously existing, older needs for capacity building, such as the need for more expertise and skills, the quest for more human resources, the weak capacity to influence the policy agenda and the necessity for more effective involvement in social dialogue

Slovakia

According to employers and trade unions, digitalisation and automation are inevitable and will significantly impact on the Slovak economy in which the automotive industry plays an important role. According to both social partners, however, they do not have sufficient capacity to deal with the impacts of digitalisation and industry 4.0 on today's workplaces. Management and labour are lacking the professional capacities for effective co-regulation in the field of labour legislation. According to the trade unions, the labour replaced by automatisisation and digital technologies should be adequately taxed. At present, there is no short-term analysis nor scenario building on the

concrete impacts of automation/digitalisation on the working conditions of employees. In the view of the employers raising awareness of the general public is also needed in this field.

Slovenia

The employers associations stressed the needs related to the digital transformation of services, and especially financial resources to purchase IT equipment, to educate employees on how to provide services on digital platforms and to strengthen the digital skills of the employees.

COVID-19 pandemic

Bulgaria

One of the main themes of social dialogue must be the economic recovery of industry in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.

Czechia

Czech social dialogue reflects all of these mega-trends of which the COVID-19 pandemic is now the most important issue for both trade unions and employers. The pandemic has significantly affected the approach to work in a number of professions and sectors and has resulted in significant losses in certain sectors (HORECA, transport, services, etc.). While the national level social partners, to date, fully supported the measures introduced by the government in the fight against COVID-19, criticism has surfaced in the most affected sectors that the government has not sufficiently compensated enterprises for the negative impacts induced by these measures. Nevertheless, the social partners are proactive in designing measures supporting the economy and helping business to stay afloat. They regularly discuss the design of these measures with the government and also with support from European Commission.

Estonia

The COVID-19 pandemic emphasized existing weaknesses and the importance of urgent actions. COVID-19 stressed the importance of the participation of the peak level social partners in labour market institutions (e.g. in health insurance and unemployment protection). In particular, their input was crucial for designing the Estonian furlough and sickness benefit schemes to tackle the crisis.

Greece

An unilateral approach of the government was applied in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the urgency and extraordinary nature of the phenomenon, policies designed and implemented to combat the pandemic were governmental decisions only. In some cases, a bilateral dialogue (with employers or trade unions) preceded, but was limited to information only, without substantive consultations.

According to Aranitou (2020), the recent crisis of the COVID 19 pandemic highlighted the absence of social dialogue as an institutionalized and consolidated process for more than 20 years. The established bodies are functioning poorly and social dialogue is limited to bilateral meetings between government representatives and one social partner. There is no substantive tripartite dialogue on employment or labour market issues and very often mere online public consultations are tagged as social dialogue (e.g. the recent National Development Program 2021-2025).

Hungary

Recent changes to working and living conditions induced by digitalisation, automation and the extraordinary situation caused by COVID-19 have raised the need for major changes in labour law, at the workplace and in personal lifestyle. The legal framework of working conditions social dialogue needs to be further developed. In this context, training and further training of employees and their representatives play an important role. As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, social partners face new challenges in the world of work. The most vulnerable sectors hit by the pandemic are the hospitality sector, tourism, entertainment, film industry, performing arts, event management and several personal services which are in dire need of immediate and concrete financial help.

Latvia

Collective bargaining is recognised as a tool to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 impact and to adapt to a changing world of work. The project “Development of Social Dialogue to Improve the Business Support Regulation” provided a starting platform to identify the obstacles to collective bargaining, remove them and to gather first experiences. Further support is needed to continue the work on a more autonomous legal framework to promote sector level collective agreements, identify issues to be regulated by sector level collective agreements and strengthen the capacity and skills of the social partners to negotiate. Further research and expertise is needed to prepare for negotiations with the government and to create an enabling system for collective bargaining following the practice of other successful EU Member States. LDDK urged the government to improve the consultation process and ensure the involvement of the social partners in all support measures for the recovery, stabilisation and transformation of the Latvian economy.

Lithuania

Both trade unions and employer organisations have been active in the debate on support for business and workers affected by COVID-19. Three of the leaders of the biggest employer organisation and trade union organisations (Confederation of Lithuanian Industrialists (LPK), Lithuanian Business Confederation (LVK) and LPSK) are actively involved in the board of experts set up by the government to advise on the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, the social partners did not identify any specific new needs for capacity building as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Poland

The COVID-19 pandemic shows that governmental decisions should not be taken without prior consultation of management and labour. Unfortunately, the lack of meaningful consultation remains a problem in Poland. According to some employers' experts (Pracodawcy RP), a key finding of the pandemic is the problem of ensuring the supply of essential jobs as well as the need to add value to this category of employment by, inter alia, increasing expenditure on health care, and further training of doctors and nurses.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a far-reaching paralysis of the activities of the tripartite body, the Social Dialogue Council (RDS). This was due to several factors which mainly hinged upon the introduction of a governmental regulation allowing the dismissal of trade union and employer representatives from the RDS. Although this regulation has not been used in practice, it has largely weakened the already poorly functioning mechanisms of consultation and tripartite

social dialogue. When the President of the Republic of Poland appointed new representatives of the government to the RDS, NSZZ Solidarność decided to leave the RDS.

Romania

In the course of by the COVID-19 pandemic, the short time frame in which most decisions affecting labour relations were adopted by the government exposed in a blunt way the weak capacity of the social partners of influencing policy-making. During and after the state of emergency, social dialogue was often reduced to pure formalities, with the social partners having little to no impact on the content of the adopted governmental measures.

Slovakia

The social partners did not identify special capacity need arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the employers, capacity needs are more likely to be found on the government's side. The employers criticised the COVID-19 relief measures adopted by the state during the first wave of pandemics, since the professional capacities of employers were not utilised. The Horeca sector and Slovak Craft Industry Federation were particularly critical.

Slovenia

The social partners are intensively proposing measures to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic which absorb many financial and human resources. Therefore this work should be financially supported in a more adequate manner. More financial support is also needed for ensuring the active participation of both sides of industry in the negotiation process, in working groups, expert committees and in the implementation of social dialogue outcomes. The number of meetings has increased dramatically with the COVID-19 pandemic and government's relief measures to be discussed.

Spain

According to the Spanish employers, one of the needs emerging out of the COVID-19 pandemic is the need for more human resources. The employers welcome the vitality of tripartite and bipartite social dialogue during the pandemic: social dialogue did not only deliver important agreements, including the three agreements on temporary lay-offs, on telework and on autonomous dispute resolution, but also opened social dialogue processes on the regulation of the platform economy and on minimum wages. However, this very intense period for social dialogue called for the participation in many tripartite bodies. As a consequence, the employers organisation pointed to overload of work requiring additional human resources.

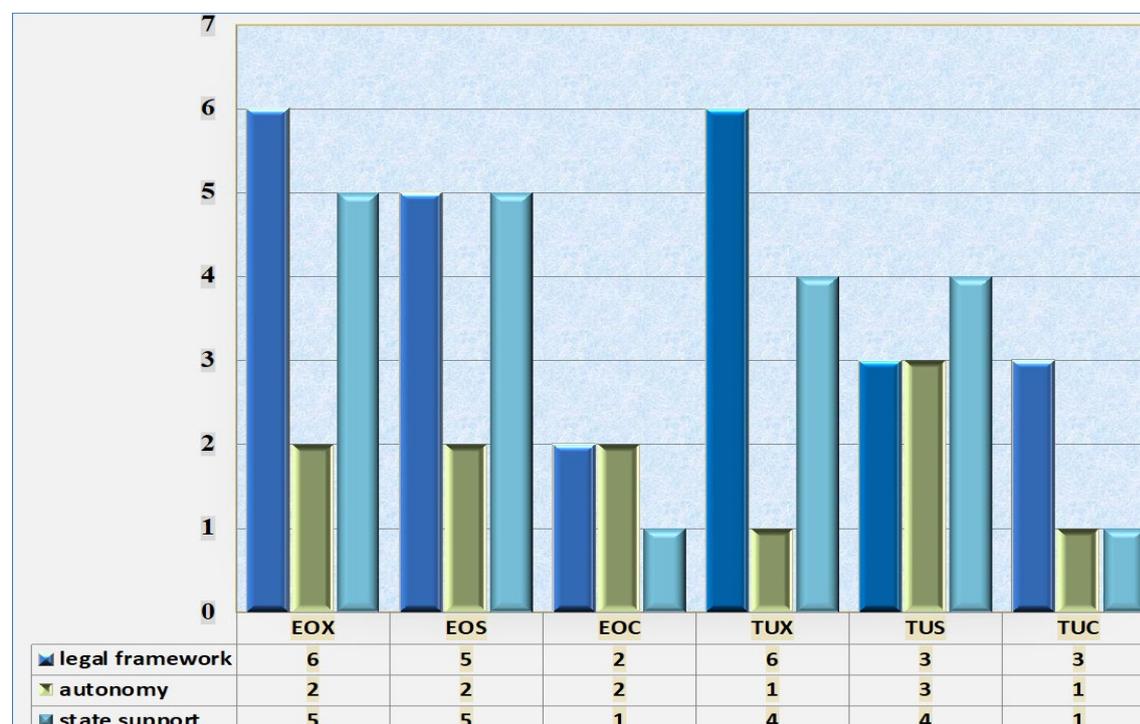
At the same time, the employers stressed the efforts made during the pandemic to better communicate with their members. The intensification of social dialogue the reduced the possibilities to consult with their members on the topics negotiated in an adequate manner. As a consequence, some of the agreements only contain general principles or courses of action obliging the employers to communicate more effectively with their members on issues of implementation. A similar point was raised by trade unions stressing the importance of a better organisational articulation of social dialogue to respond quickly to policy challenges and to deliver effective solutions.

Trade unions and employers coincide in pointing out how social dialogue can deliver timely policy responses. Both sides of industry make a very positive assessment of this experience and confirm that many of these changes will stay after the pandemic.

Summary and conclusions

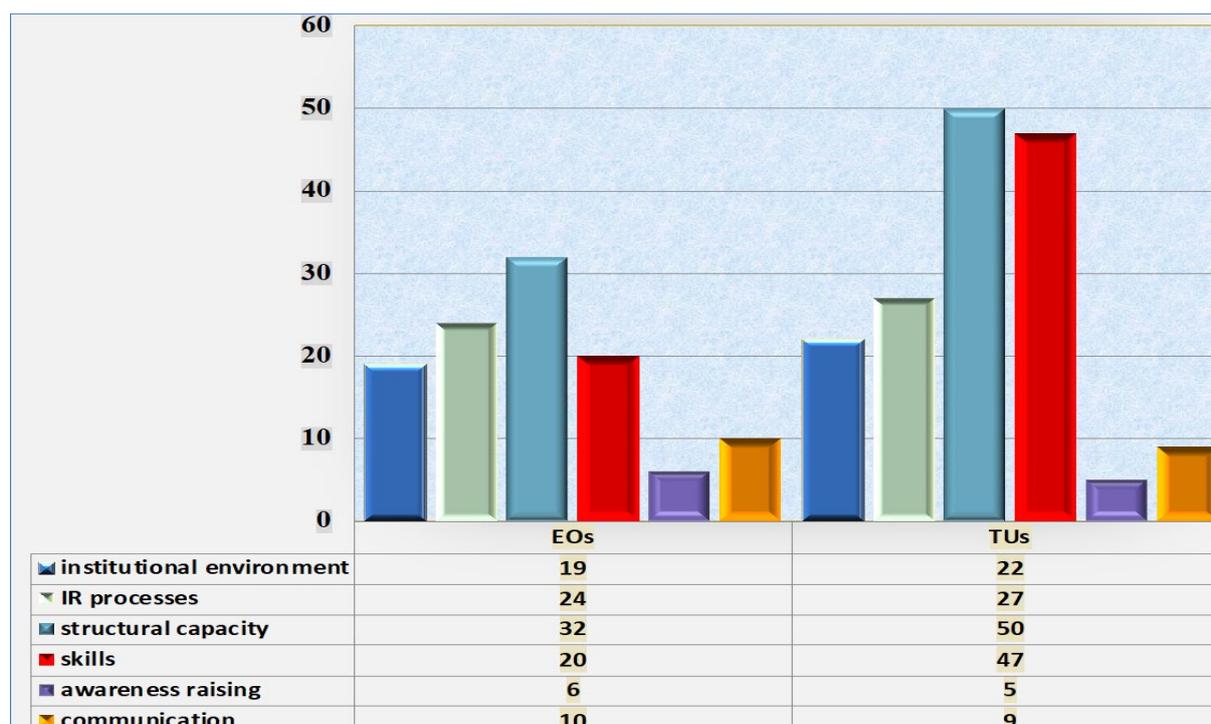
The institutional needs under investigation in this report are threefold: the legal framework, the autonomy of the social partners and support by the state and public authorities. The picture as sketched by the responses of the national social partners is very clear. The need for an enabling legal framework was identified the most often by the Network of Eurofound Correspondents as an important prerequisite for an effective social dialogue (25 nominations, cf. graph 8 below).

Graph 8: institutional needs



Second, state support for social dialogue was also deemed essential (23), whereas the autonomy of the social partners only scored third (11). From the latter low score one may conclude, that the autonomy of the social partners is by and large well established and not a lot of capacity building seems to be needed in this field. In some Member States (EL, RO) it is still the previous financial and economic crisis from 2008 until 2015 which is blamed for a serious dismantlement of the national industrial relations systems. In Slovakia, the employers report their dissatisfaction with not being sufficiently heard in the shaping of the governmental responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. The specific country narratives around these three pillars are summarised below.

The second objective of this working paper is to map examples of good practice which the national social partners have put into place as regards capacity building in the 5 main fields of observation: enabling legal framework, industrial relations processes and advocacy, structural capacity, skills and awareness raising and communication.

Graph 9: examples of good practice

As graph 9 above shows, the majority of activities on the employers' side is clearly focused on structural capacity initiatives and industrial relations processes. Skills projects and influencing the institutional framework come second and third. The good practices cases sampled on the trade union side are more accentuated with a strong focus on skill related projects and activities around structural capacities. Activities aiming at the industrial relations processes and the institutional environment lag clearly behind.

Finally, the Eurofound mapping exercise of capacity building for an effective social dialogue also covered the questions whether current mega-trends (climate change, digitalisation/automation) and/or the COVID-19 pandemic had altered the needs of management and labour.

In sum, the needs and challenges arising both from the mega-trends and the COVID-19 pandemic vary – as often – across the member States. Yet, in particular with regard to the capacity building needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic the message from many on the national centres is very clear: the pandemic has not necessarily created new need, but it has accelerated and intensified needs and challenges that had already existed prior to this centennial crisis (EE, EL, LT, PL, RO, SK).

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Annexes

Annex 1: Network of Eurofound Correspondents

Country	National Centres
Austria	Working Life Research Centre (FORBA)
Belgium	HIVA Research Institute for Work and Society, KU Leuven
Bulgaria	Institute for Social and Trade Union Research (ISTUR)
Croatia	Institute of Public Finance
Cyprus	Cyprus Labour Institute of the Pancyprian Federation of Labour (INEK-PEO)
Czechia	Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs (RILSA)
Denmark	Oxford Research A/S
Estonia	Praxis Centre for Policy Studies
Finland	Oxford Research AB
France	IR Share
Germany	Institute for Economic and Social Research, Hans Böckler Foundation
Greece	Labour Institute of GSEE (INE/GSEE)
Hungary	Kopint-Tárki Institute for Economic Research
Ireland	IRN Publishing
Italy	University of Milan
Latvia	Economic Prognosis Centre (EPC Ltd)
Lithuania	Labour Market Research Institute (DRTI)
Luxembourg	Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research
Malta	Centre for Labour Studies, University of Malta
Netherlands	Panteia BV
Poland	Foundation Institute of Public Affairs (ISP)
Portugal	Centre for Social Intervention (CESIS)
Romania	European Institute of Romania (EIR)
Slovakia	Institute for Labour and Family Research
Slovenia	Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana
Spain	University of Barcelona
Sweden	Oxford Research AB

Annex 2: Tables

Table 1: Capacity building needs and levels

Capacity needs	Employers			Trade unions		
	cross-sector	sector	company	cross-sector	sector	company
I. institutional environment						
enabling legal framework	BG, EL, HU, LV, RO, SI, SK (XRI) ^{29 30}	BG, EE, EL, HU, RO, SK (XI)	RO, SK (XI)	EL, HU, LV, RO, SI, SK (XS)	EE, EL, RO	EE, RO, SK(S) ³¹
autonomy of the social partners	BG, EL, LV, SK (XR)	BG, EL, LV, SK(X)	HU, SK(X)	BG, SK(XS)	BG, HU, LV, SK(X)	SK(XS)
supportive role of the state	BG, HU, LV, SI, SK(XR)	BG, HU, IT, LV, SI, SK(X)	SK(XI)	BG, EL, HU, LT, SI, SK(S)	BG, EL, HU, IT, LT, LV, SK(S)	LT, SK(S)
other						
II. effective engagement in social dialogue						
social dialogue	BG, EL, ES, HR, HU, RO, SI, SK(XRI)	BG, EL, HR, HU, LV, RO, SI, SK(X)	BG, EL, HR, HU, SK(X)	BG, EL, ES, HR, HU, RO, SK(XS)	BG, EL, HR, HU, LV, RO, SK(S)	BG, EL, HR, LV, SK(S)
collective bargaining	BG, EL, HU ³² , SK(X)	BG, CZ, HU, EL, RO, SK(XR)	BG, CZ, EL, SK(XI)	BG, EL, PL, SI, SK(XS)	BG, CZ, EE, EL, HU, PL, RO, SK(XS)	BG, CZ, EE, EL, HU, RO, SK(XS)
(co) regulating the employment relationship	BG, ES, HU, LV, SK (XRI) ³³	BG, EE, LV, SK(XRI)	BG, EE, SK(XRI)	BG, ES, HU, LV, SI, SK(XS)	BG, EE, HU, LV,	BG, EE, HU
tripartite and bipartite consultations	BG, EL, IT, PL	BG, EL, LV	BG, EL,	BG, EL, PL	BG, EE, EL	BG, EL
influencing public policy via advocacy	BG, HR, HU, SK(XRI)	BG, HR, HU, LV, SK(XR)	BG, HR, SK(XI)	BG, HR, HU, IT, SI, SK(XS)	BG, HR, RO	BG, HR, RO
other						

²⁹ X represents the opinion of the **largest employers'** and **trade union** organisations **AZZZ SR** and **KOZ SR**. R represents opinion of the **RUZ** and I represents the opinion of the **APZ employers' organisation**.

³⁰ Cross-sector employers' organisations and trade unions see enabling legal framework as one of the two most important areas of capacity-building.

³¹ S represents the opinion of a **smaller cross-sector trade union SOS** (not involved in tripartite consultations at the HSR nor the national project Centre for Social Dialogue).

³² Highest score (5) at all levels.

³³ Cross-sector employers' organisations and trade unions see effective engagement in (co) regulating the employment relationship as one of the two most important areas of capacity-building.

III. structural capacity						
long-term comprehensive support of the actors	BG, HU, LV, PL, SI, SK(XR)	BG, HU, LV, SK(X)	SK(X)	BG, HU, LV, SK(XS)	BG, LV, SK(XS)	SK(XS)
increase membership / representativeness	BG, HU, LV, PL, RO, SI, SK (XR)	BG, EL, IT, LV, RO, SK(X)	EL, SK(XI)	BG, CZ, EE, EL, ES, LT, LV, RO, SI, SK(S)	BG,CZ, EE, EL, ES, HU, IT, LT, LV, RO, SK(XS)	CZ, EE, EL, ES, IT, LT, LV, SK(XS)
stronger capacity / mandate to negotiate	BG, CZ, EE, HR, HU, LT, PL, SK(XR)	BG, EL, HR, HU, LT, LV, RO, SK(X)	EL, HR, SK(X)	BG, CZ, EL, HR, HU, SK(X)	BG, EE, EL, HR, LV, HU, SK(XS)	EL, HR, SK(XS)
better financial resources	BG, CZ, EE, ES, HU, LT, LV, SI, SK(XR)	BG, CZ, EE, EL, HU, LT, LV, SK(X)	EL, HU, LT, SK(X)	BG, CZ, ES, HU, LT, LV, SI, SK(S)	BG, CZ, EE, EL, ES, HU, LT, LV, SK(XS)	ES, EL, LT, SK(XS)
sufficient staff	BG, EE, ES, HU, LT, LV, RO, SI, SK(XR)	BG, EE, HU, LT, LV, RO, SK(X)	EL, LT, SK(X)	EE, LT, LV, RO, SI	BG, EE, EL, HU, LT, LV, RO SK(S)	EL, LT, SK(S)
better access to expertise	BG, EE, HU ³⁴ , LT, LV, SI, SK(XRI)	BG, EE, EL, HU, LT, SK(X)	IT, LT, SK(X)	BG, EE, HU, LT, LV	BG, EE, HU, LT, SK(S)	HU, IT, LT, SK(S)
forming thematic groups for specific topics (e.g. EU Semester)	BG, CZ, EL, ES, HU, LT, LV, SI, SK(XR)	BG, CZ, HU, SK(X)	SK(X)	BG, CZ, EL, ES, HU, LV, SI, SK(XS)	BG, CZ, LT, SK(XS)	SK(X)
other					EE ³⁵	EE
IV. skills						
skills in general	BG, CZ, HU, LT, LV, PL, RO, SI, SK(R)	BG, CZ, LT, LV, RO	BG, EL, HU, LT	BG, CZ, HU, LT, LV, PL, RO SK(X)	BG, CZ, HU, LT, LV, RO, SK(X)	BG, EL, LT, LV, RO, SK(XS)
language skills for EU level	BG, HU, PL, SK(R)	BG, EL, HU, LV	BG, EL	BG, HU, LT, LV, SK(XS)	BG, EL, HU, IT, LT, LV, SK(XS)	EL, IT, LT, SK(XS)
analytical skills	BG, CZ, HR, HU, PL, RO, SI, SK(R)	BG, CZ, HU, LV, RO	BG, EL, HR	BG, CZ, HU, LT, LV, RO, SI, SK(X)	BG, CZ, HR, HU, LT, LV, RO, SK(XS)	EL, HR, LT, LV, RO, SK(XS)
research skills	BG, HR, HU, RO, SI, SK(XRI)	BG, HR, HU, LV, RO, SK(X)	BG, EL, HR, SK(X)	BG, HR, HU, LT, LV, RO, SI, SK(X)	BG, HR, HU, LT, LV, RO, SK(XS)	EL, HR, LT, RO, SK(XS)

³⁴ Highest score (5) at levels indicated.

³⁵ EAKL notes that there is no good model to organise employees in small, medium and micro enterprises (majority of enterprises, i.e. more than 90%).

negotiation skills	BG, CZ, HR, LV, SI, SK(RI)	BG, CZ, HR, LV, RO	BG, EL, HR	BG, CZ, HR, LT, LV, SK(X)	BG, CZ, ES, HR, LT, LV, RO, SK(X)	EL, ES, HR, LT, LV, RO, SK(XS)
numeric / ITC skills	BG, CZ, HR, SI, SK(XR)	BG, CZ, HR, HU, SK(X)	BG, CZ, EL, HR, SK(X)	BG, CZ, HU, SI, SK(X)	BG, CZ, HR, SK(X)	CZ, EL, HR, LV, SK(XS)
V. other (e.g.)						
raising public awareness for benefits of social dialogue	BG, CZ, EL, HR, HU ³⁶ , IT, LT, LV, PL, SI, SK(XR)	BG, CZ, EL, HR, HU, IT, LT, SI, SK(X)	BG, EL, HR, HU, IT, LT, SK(X)	EE, EL, HR, HU, IT, LT, LV, RO, SI, SK(XS)	EE, EL, HR, HU, IT, LT, RO, SK(XS)	EL, HR, IT, LT, SK(XS)
need to improve communication with other social partners	BG, HR, LV, SK(R)	BG, EL, HR	BG, EL, HR	EL, HR, LV, SK(S)	EL, HR, SK(S)	EL, HR, SK(S)

³⁶ Highest score (5) all levels indicated.

Table 2. Examples of good practice

Examples of good practice	Employers				Trade unions			
	cross-sector	sector	company	other	cross-sector	sector	company	other
I. institutional environment								
enabling legal framework	BG	BG, LV			BG, HU, LT, LV	BG, HU, LT		
autonomy of the social partners	ES, SI, SK (I) ³⁷	BG, SK(I)			ES, HU, LV, SI	BG, LV		
supportive role of the state	BG, EE, EL, LV	BG, EE, HU	EE		BG, EE, EL, HU, LV	BG, EE	EE	
other								
II. effective engagement in social dialogue								
collective bargaining	BG, CZ, EL, LT, LV	BG, HU	HU	LT	BG, CZ, EL, HR ³⁸ , HU, LV, PL	BG, HU		
(co) regulating the employment relationship	BG, EE, EL	BG, EE	EE, SK(I)		BG, EE, EL	BG, EE	EE	
tripartite and bipartite consultations	SI							
influencing public policy via advocacy	CZ, SI				CZ, HR ³⁹			
other								
III. structural capacity								
long-term comprehensive support of the actors	BG, CZ, EL, SK(I)	BG, CZ			BG, CZ, EL, HR ⁴⁰ , HU	BG, CZ, HR ⁴¹ , HU		

³⁷ I represents the opinion of the **APZ employer organisations**

³⁸ New web page by UATUC Decent Work.

³⁹ New web page by UATUC Decent Work.

⁴⁰ There was significant help of ETUC in the support of trade unions in Croatia.

⁴¹ EDUCA.

increase membership / representativeness	EE, PL	EE	EE		BG, EE, ES, SK(x) ⁴²	BG, EE, HR ⁴³ , HU, PL, RO	EE, RO	
stronger capacity / mandate to negotiate	CZ, LV, SI	CZ			BG, HU, LV, SI	BG, HR ⁴⁴		
better financial resources		HU	HU		HU, SK(x)	RO,	RO,	
sufficient staff	BG, EL,	BG, HU			BG, EL, HU, LV, SK(x)	BG,		
better access to expertise	BG, CZ, EL, SI	BG, CZ			BG, CZ, EL, HU, LV, SK(x)	BG, CZ, RO	RO	
forming thematic groups for specific topics (e.g. EU semester)	CZ, PL, SI,	CZ, SK(I)			CZ, PL	CZ		
other								
IV. skills								
skills in general	BG, CZ, HR ⁴⁵ , LV, PL, SI, SK(x)	BG, CZ, LV, SK(x)	HU, SK(xI)		BG, CZ, SI,	BG, CZ, HR ⁴⁶ , HU, LV, RO	RO	LV
language skills	BG, SI, SK(x)	BG, SK(x)	SK(x)		BG, HU	BG,		
analytical skills	BG, CZ, SK(x)	BG, CZ, SK(x)	SK(x)		BG	BG, HU, LV,		LV
research skills					BG,	BG, LV,		LV
negotiation skills	BG, CZ, EL, SK(x)	BG, CZ, SK(x)	SK(x)		BG, CZ, EL, HU, LV, SI,	BG, CZ, HU, LV, RO	HU, LV, RO	LV
numeric / ITC skills	BG, CZ	BG, CZ	BG, CZ		BG, CZ, HU	BG, CZ		
soft skills	BG	BG			BG	BG, LV,		LV
V. other (e.g.)								
raising public awareness for benefits of social dialogue	BG, CZ, LV	BG, CZ	HU		BG, CZ, HR ⁴⁷ , HU, LT			

⁴² X represents the opinion of the **largest employers' and trade union organisations AZZZ SR and KOZ SR.**

⁴³ Database for collective agreements <http://www.kolektivni-ugovori.info>.

⁴⁴ New web page by UATUC on Decent Work.

⁴⁵ A mentoring programme for business women.

⁴⁶ EDUCA – New system of trade union training, <http://www.sssh.hr/hr/projekti>.

⁴⁷ A new website on Decent work.

need to improve communication with other social partners	BG, CZ, HR ⁴⁸ , SI, SK(X)	BG, CZ, HR, SK(X)	SK(XI)		BG, CZ, HR, HU, SI	BG, CZ, HR		
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⁴⁸ [With social dialogue to quality working places in construction and tourism.](#)

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