

# **CHANCES AND LIMITS OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE TRADE UNION STRATEGIES**

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# EUROPEAN SOCIAL DIALOGUE IN THE RAIL SECTOR

ETF website

<http://www.itfglobal.org/etf/publications.cfm>

in

Bulgarian, Hungarian, Romanian, Czeck, Polish,  
Latvian etc,  
English and French

## **LOOKING INTO THE HISTORY OF EUROPEAN SOCIAL DIALOGUE**

**- an achievement -**

**1958** - foundation of the European Communities

**1985** - first inter-professional social dialogue at European level

**1997** - fully institutionalised European social dialogue with the right to conclude agreements also at the sectoral level that can become binding via EU legislation



## **CHANCES**

**Once CER and ETF jointly defined the tasks of the social dialogue as follows:**

- to anticipate the social and safety dimension of the changes;
- to define social standards at the same European level;
- to monitor new developments;
- to identify common interests and act together vis-à-vis European policy makers;
- to contribute to creating a European railway culture.



# CHANCES

- We can put social questions at the European agenda and raise awareness for the social situation at a European level;
- We can come to common understanding with employers and in the best case: we can defined the social conditions for our sector on our own;
- We are the only organisations, which representativity is regularly checked and so we are a body for consultation; our voice should be heard and it is more heard when we come to an agreemnet among the social partners.

# CHANCES

## LOOKING AT THE INSTRUMENTS

**Agreements** on eg working conditions can become **legally binding** european wide via implementation by EU law (working conditions of mobile personnel)

**Agreements** that can be implemented by the social partners themselves at national / company level (in principle agreement on locomotive drivers' license)

**Joint recommendations**, which are addressed to own members (eg on women in the rail sector, on employability as a new concepts for human ressource policy)

**Joint declarations**, which are addressed to the policy makers EP, Council Commission (eg. Internalisation of external costs / Eurovignette Directive)

**Joint projects and studies:** fact finding and analyses of employers and trade unions together

**Consultation** by the European Commission on social matters (often issue of conflict with the Commision because of different interpretation of 'social impact')

## **LIMITS**

**Dependent from the good will or capacity of understanding of the employers**

**No instrument to force employers to negotiate on issues of interest for workers;** that is why the unions demand the Commission to push employers via « threatening » with legislative measures

**Limited possibilities to ensure that Social dialogue results at the European level are implemented at national and company level; ;** that is why unions prefer legislation / agreements that are transferred to legislation

**In national negotiations there is always a link between working conditions and pay / salaries; at European level we can not make this combination**



Where we are today:

The climate in the railway social  
dialogue  
is quite cold !



## **TRADE UNION STRATEGIES**

### **Work program of the ETF Railway Section**

1. Political lobbying on sustainable transport, railway policy and legislation that **we** want
2. Internal strengthening: campaigns, networking, coordination, organising
3. Using European social dialogue whenever it is possible



## **POLITICAL LOBBYING**

ETF Congress resolution: Trade union strategy for sustainable transport

Fighting further liberalisation of the railways like domestic Passenger Transport

True evaluation and social impact assessment of railway policy

ETF in Brussels and all affiliates in their countries

- Contact Members of European Parliament
- Identify persons in transport Ministries who participate in the Council meetings, working groups and Commission meetings

Inform about ETF positions and the opinions of the national unions



## **INTERNAL STRENGTHENING**

**Networking:** unions have to meet each other, inform about plans and projects of the companies, try to act together in order to avoid that companies play workers against each others

**Coordination:** unions have to inform each other about their objectives and strategies eg in collective bargaining; try to go into the same direction

**Campaigns:** to make our issues known; eg. in order to achieve certification of on board personnel we have to act at European and national level at the same time

**Organising:** first of all the membership of the unions must be strengthened, eg. organising workers in new railway companies appearing at the market



**Using European social dialogue  
whenever it is possible**

**Convince also national employers  
about the usefulness of European  
social dialogue**



**THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR PATIENCE**

[www.etf-europe.org](http://www.etf-europe.org)

