

2nd European Event - Dublin

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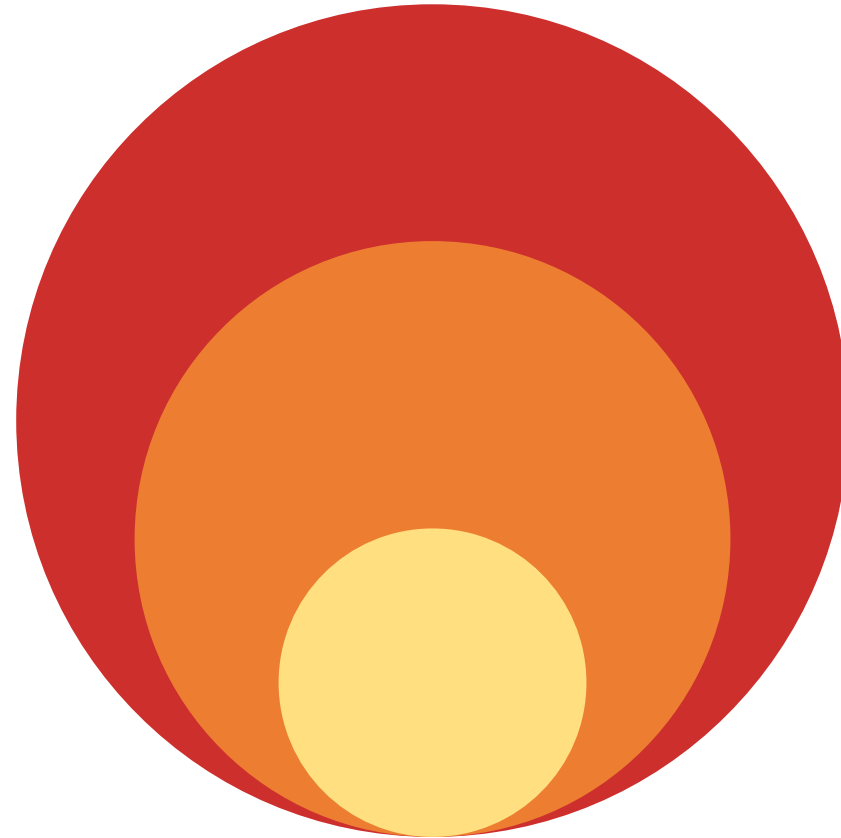
Social Economy and Social Dialogue in Selected Countries

First Results of the Mesmer+ Project

**Introduction &
Research Questions**

Research Activities

First Results



*Introduction & Research
Questions*

International momentum for Social Economy

United Nations

A/RES/77/281

European Commission

SOCIAL ECONOMY ACTION PLAN

**SOCIAL ECONOMY:
COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION**

June 2023
#SocialEconomy #SocialRights

What about social dialogue?

“an effective organisation of administrative and institutional structures is key to understanding the specific needs of the sector and to facilitating communication with its stakeholders” (European Commission 2023)

The social economy “can also lead to fairer working conditions for its workers, especially through the promotion of social dialogue” (European Commission 2023)

RQ1. How inclusive are social dialogue institutions towards social economy players?

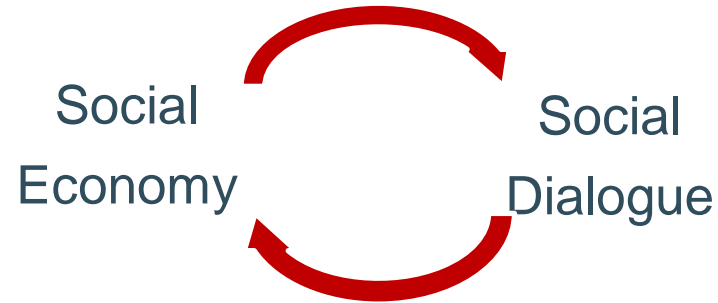
RQ2. How are social economy players having their voice heard within national industrial relations systems?



MESMER+ Introduction & Research Questions

Cross-sectoral approach to the social economy.
Three fundamental principles:
"(1) the primacy of people and social and/or environmental objectives over profit; 2° the reinvestment of most profits and surpluses to carry out activities in the interest of members/users ("collective interest") or society as a whole ("general interest"); (3) democratic and/or participatory governance"

Source: Social Economy Action Plan (EU Commission 2021)



All types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between or between representatives of governments, employers and workers on matters of common interest relating to economic and social policy.

Source: [ILO](#)

Definitions: broad and inclusive

The MESMER+ project aims to establish an up-to-date in-depth mapping on activity and representation of social economy players – both from the employers' and employees' side – within social dialogue institutions and various industrial relations settings in nine countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Italy, Ireland, North Macedonia, Poland, Spain and Sweden. This mapping encapsulates several dimensions, including institutions, actors, practices and processes.

MESMER+ Introduction & Research Questions

Table: recap – final selection of countries

	Organised corporatism	Social partnership	State centered	Liberal pluralism	Transitioned post- socialist economies	Ascending post- socialist economies
No/little						North Macedonia
Moderate	Sweden	Belgium	Italy	Ireland	Poland	Bulgaria
High/ institutionalised			France Spain			

- Variety of Industrial Relations models and welfare systems
- Variety in the recognition of Social Economy (Chaves & Monzon 2017)

Research Activities

Research Activities

Desk Research

Interviews

Policy labs



Objectives

- 9 Country Reports
- Comparative Mapping Report

First Results

1. **Defining Comparative Elements:** Identify the components to be included in the comparative approach.
2. **Organizing into Dimensions:** Group these elements into meaningful dimensions.
3. **Country Categorization:** Develop a typology by categorizing selected countries based on the research questions.

Social Dialogue

- Industrial Relations system and recent trends
- Involvement of the State
 - Tripartite
 - Bipartite
 - Autonomy of social dialogue as provider of norms in labour law
- Representativeness: rules and criteria
 - Regular monitoring and evaluation

Recognition of Social Economy

- As a concept
- As a legal framework
- As a measurable reality
- As an interest represented by groups and organisations
- Top-down influence from the EU or sui generis movement
- Identity and self-recognition

Interplay between Social Dialogue and Social Economy

- Diversity of employment statutes
- Coverage of Collective Labour Agreements?
- Dedicated (sectoral) social dialogue level
 - Outcomes and coverage?
- (In)direct representation in cross-sectoral social dialogue
- Innovations at workplace level

Relationship with Trade Unions and Employer Organisations

- Common historical roots with trade unions
 - Revolving doors
- Crossed memberships with social economy organisations
- Social economy representative organisations: employers organisations or other movements and networks
- TU perspective: equal treatment for all workers
- Understanding of the Social Economy by TU and EO (and the State)

Obstacles to Social Economy participation in Social Dialogue

- Diversity of actors and activities
 - Competition
- Professionalisation of representative organisations
- Social Economy representative organisations “forgotten” in consultation with the government
- “Neglected employers”: recognition but restricted access to policy and decision-making processes

Obstacles to SE participation in SD

- Organising the social economy
 - > < structure of social dialogue
- Representativity as social partner
- Majority of SMEs
- Confusion between the social economy and the social services sector
- Volunteering as key feature of both employers and employees in the SE

Opportunities for social economy participation in Social Dialogue

- Gradual recognition by Trade Unions and Employers Organisations
- Social Economy Organisations taking on employer role
- SE as a recognised "sector"
 - Incorporating sectorial activities
 - Coexisting with public and private sectors
- Civil dialogue, territorial dialogue

Trade-offs in social economy participation in social dialogue

- Specific Labour Regulations for the Social Economy? Or Equal Treatment?
- Social Economy as a Movement: Granting Mandates to Organizations as Social Partners (Employers' Organizations)
 - Conflicting views
- Determining the Appropriate Social Dialogue Level to Invest In:
 - Territorial? (Local/Regional?)
 - Company-Level?
 - Sectoral (Branches)?
 - Cross-Sectoral?



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Mapping European Social Economy:
Employment, Social Dialogue
and the European Pillar of Social Rights

Thank you!



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