



Sectoral Social Dialogue in EU 12 and Candidate Countries



European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
Confédération européenne des syndicats (CES)



ITC 
International Training Centre

Sectoral Social Dialogue in EU 12 and Candidate Countries

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European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
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ETUC	European Trade Union Confederation
ETUI	European Trade Union Institute
EFFAT	European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions
EFBWW	European Federation of Building and Woodworkers
EMCEF	European Mine, Chemical and Energy Workers' Federation
EMF	European Metalworkers' Federation
ETUF-TCL	European Trade Union Federation of Textiles, Clothing and Leather
ILO	International Labour Organization

Bulgaria [CITUB] Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Bulgaria, Confederation of Labour Podkrepa, [FSOGSDP] Federation of Trade Union Organisations in Forestry and Wood Processing Industries, Trade Union Metalicy, Machine-building and Metal Workers' National Federation, [NFTINI] National Federation of Technical Industry, Science, Informatics, Federation of Transport Trade Unions in Bulgaria, NLF Chemistry and Industry, National Federation Metallurgy, NF Chemistry

Croatia [UATUC] Union of Autonomous Trade Unions of Croatia, [STUH] Tourism and Service Trade Union of Croatia, [SMH] Metalworkers Trade Union of Croatia, [EKN] Autonomous Trade Union of Workers in Power Industry, Chemistry and Non-Metal Industry of Croatia, Croatian Telecommunication Trade Union, [SGH] Trade Union of Construction Industry of Croatia, Croatian Forestry Union, Post Trade Union

Cyprus [SEK] Cyprus Workers' Confederation, OVIEK-SEK, Construction and Miners Workers Federation-SEK, Trade Union of Builders and Carpenters-DEOK, Trade Union of Hotel and Tourism Employees-DEOK

Czech Republic [CMKOS] Czech Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions, [OS KOVO] Czech Metalworkers' Federation, [COSPHCR] *Ceskomoravský Odborový Svaz Pohostinství Hotelu a Cestovního Ruchu*, [OS SKBP] Trade Union of Employees of Glass, Ceramics, Costume Jewellery and Porcelain Industries

Estonia [EAKL] Confederation of Estonian Trade Unions, [ESTAL] Estonian Communication and Service Workers Trade Union, Association of Estonian Energetics Trade Unions, [ETKA] Estonian Trade Union of Commercial and Servicing Employees

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Hungary [MSZOSZ] National Confederation of Hungarian Trade Unions, [VISZ] Trade Union of Hospitality, Catering and Tourism, [BDSZ] Mining and Energy Workers' Union, [VASAS] Hungarian Metalworkers' Federation, [VDSZ] Federation of Trade Unions of Chemical, Energy and Allied Workers, [EFEDOSZSZ] Trade Union of Building Workers

Latvia [LBAS] Latvia Free Trade Unions Federation, [LAKRS] Latvian Trade Union of Public Service and Transport Workers, Latvian Trade Union Energija

Lithuania [LDF] Lituianian Labour Federation, Lituianian Trade Union of Commercial and Cooperative Employees, Lituianian Energy Workers' Trade Union Federation, Lituianian Building Workers' Trade Union, Lituianian Service Workers Employees, Lituianian Trade Union SOLIDARUMAS

Macedonia (FYR) [SSM] Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia, Trade Union of Workers in Agro Sector in Macedonia, [SIER] Trade Union of Industry, Energy and Mining, Trade Union of Workers in Forest, Wood Industry and Energy

Malta [GWU] General Workers' Union, GWU Hospitality and Food Section

Poland Food Workers' Secretariat of NSZZ "Solidarnosc" , [FZZP] Trade Union Federation of Chemical, Glass-Making and Ceramic Industries in Poland-OPZZ, *Związek Zawodowy Górników w Polsce*, Seamen's and Fishermen's Trade Union Federation-OPZZ, National Secretariat of Construction and Wood Industry of NSZZ "Solidarnosc"

Romania CARTEL ALFA, [CNSLR-FRATIA] National Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Romania , [CSDR] Democratic Trade Union Confederation of Romania, FSS Metarom, FNS Solidaritatea Metal, PETROM Trade Union Federation, [FNCL] National federation of Commerce, Sanitas Federation, FGS FAMILIA , BNS-Federatia Nationala a Sindicatelor din Electricitate Univers, UFS Atlas

Slovakia [KOZ SR] Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic, [OZPOCR] Trade Union of Employees in Commerce and Tourism, [ECHOZ] Energy Chemical Trade Union, [SLOVES] Slovak Trade Union of Public Administration and Culture, [ZOJES] Trade Union of Nuclear Power Workers, [OZ KOVO] Slovak Metalworkers' Federation, [IOZ] Integrated Trade Union- Building, transport, textile, clothing and leather

Slovenia [AFTUS] Association of Free Trade Unions of Slovenia, [SKEI] Trade Union for Metal and Electro Industry, [GIT] Trade Union of Catering and Tourism of Slovenia, Trade Union of Chemical, Non-Metal and Rubber Industry of Slovenia

Turkey Mineworkers' Union of Turkey, [YOL-IS] Turkish Union of Road, Construction and Building Workers, HAK-IS Food Sector, [KESK] Confederation of Public Employees Trade Unions

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Abbreviations

- EIF** European Industry Federations: There are 12 European Industry Federations affiliated to the ETUC. They represent workers in individual sectors. The industry federations are responsible for European social dialogue at sectoral level: the 40 different European sectoral social dialogue committees discuss issues specific to the industries they cover and can agree a wide range of initiatives.
- ESD** European social dialogue
- EU** European Union
- EWC** European Works Council
- EU-12** Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia
- EU-15** Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom
- EU-27** Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom

A) Introduction

Social dialogue refers to the discussions, consultations, negotiations and joint actions that take place between employers and trade unions on a wide range of social and work-related issues. At the EU level, social dialogue makes an important contribution to the EU strategy for growth and jobs. It is an essential element of the European social model and complements national social dialogue and industrial relations. The European Commission facilitates social dialogue.

The consultation dimension of European social dialogue was recognised in the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 and the Treaty of Rome in 1957. The negotiation dimension was initiated by the so-called “Val Duchesse process” in 1985 and taken further in the European social partners’ agreement on social policy in 1991. This led to the social protocol annexed to the Maastricht Treaty in 1993 and is permanently incorporated in the European Treaty in 1997 (articles 138 and 139). As follow-up, the Commission adopted the Communication on adapting and promoting social dialogue at Community level and the Decision of 20 May 1998, dealing specifically with the sectoral dimension of European social dialogue and creating European sectoral social dialogue committees (hereafter: ‘committees’). These committees are a forum for relationship-building, information sharing, discussion, consultation, negotiation and joint action. The new article 152 of the Lisbon Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) highlights the Union's commitment to promoting the role of European social partners and supporting social dialogue. It also acknowledges the autonomy of European social partners. In addition to cross-industry social dialogue, sectoral social dialogue is an increasing part of this European governance tool¹.

The primary goal of the ILO² is to contribute, together with its constituents – governments, employers’ organisations and workers’ organisations - to the achievement of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people, a goal embedded in the ILO Declaration of 2008 on *Social Justice for a Fair Globalization*, which has now been widely adopted by the international community. In order to help its member States and the social partners to reach the goal, the ILO promotes a Decent Work Agenda which comprises four interrelated areas: respect for fundamental workers’ rights and international labour standards, employment promotion, social protection and social dialogue. The ILO Global Jobs Pact, adopted in 2009, is yet another multilateral instrument that emphasizes the vital importance of social dialogue for economic recovery and social progress.

In the light of the convergence between the strategic objectives and main policy objectives of the ILO and the EC, the project builds upon, and contributes to, the long-standing cooperation between the two institutions in advancing the ILO Decent Work Agenda and the European Social Model.

The ETUC³'s prime objective is to promote the European Social Model and to work on the development of a united Europe – one of peace and stability in which working people and their families enjoy full human and civil rights and high living standards. The ETUC is involved in economic and social policy-making at the highest level, working with all the EU institutions: the

¹ Commission staff working document on the functioning and potential of European sectoral social dialogue, Brussels, 22.7.2010, SEC(2010) 964 final

² International Labour Organization

³ ETUC – European Trade Union Confederation

Council, the Commission and Parliament. The ETUC provided strong political support for EU enlargement and it supports active, efficient trade union involvement from the EU-12 and CC in European social dialogue.

The accession of 12 new Member States in 2004 and 2007 has increased the variety of industrial relations systems within the EU, as there is little tradition of social partnership and autonomous, bipartite collective bargaining in the EU-12. In most new Member States, tripartite concentration prevails, while bipartite and sectoral social bargaining is rarely well developed. Whereas the formal institutions of tripartite councils are established in all the EU-12, the established and validated expectation of effective routine participation in tripartite policy arrangements is not yet fully established, in particular with regard to trade unions⁴.

Wild⁵ (2006) gives a comprehensive overview of the capacities of the social partners in new EU member and candidate countries. Wild stresses the fact that, given the existence of tripartite dialogue in some form in every country, the national social partners felt little 'demand-side pull' either from members or from government for additional national and bipartite social dialogue. They often struggled to see bipartism and tripartism as complementary processes; they could not see an independent agenda for bipartite dialogue, particularly when the legislative role of the state left little flexibility for independent operation. They saw difficulties in allocating resources to bipartite dialogue, given that the state supported the administrative arrangements for tripartite social partnership; and they could not see beyond a tripartite dialogue that was often adversarial in nature. The following trends were outlined as indicative of the quality and capacity of social partners to be fully involved in the EU social dialogue: poor inter- and intra-organisational cooperation, domination of tripartism, encouragement of adversarial relationships, lack of government enthusiasm for autonomous social dialogue, weak employer commitment or ability to engage, declining trade union membership and insufficient representation, notably of workers in small family businesses.

European sectoral social partners have been working with their new members in the EU-12 and the candidate countries for many years⁶. Projects, technical seminars, round tables and the development of tools for capacity building have increased over the last two years.

⁴ Industrial Relations in Europe 2008, page 151

⁵ Alan Wild (2006), CEEC social partners' participation in the European social dialogue: What are social partners' needs?, Final report, joint project of the European social partner organisations

⁶ Industrial Relations in Europe 2008, page 157

Box A – Examples of tools for sector-level capacity building in new EU member countries (2006-2007)

European social partners in:

- the **furniture** sector (a guide to collective bargaining in the EU-27 + 2 gives an overview of the existing collective agreements at national level)
- the **rail** sector (gathered participants from across the enlarged EU and the accession countries and aimed at improving the social partners' knowledge of their counterparts, holding an exchange of views on European social dialogue in the sector and identifying the social partners' needs after enlargement)
- the **telecommunications** sector (discussions to familiarise social partners in the EU-12 with the logistics and organisation of a plenary session of a social dialogue committee in order to improve participation by social partners from the EU-12 in the European social dialogue on telecoms)
- the **textiles, clothing and leather** sectors (at round tables in each country, both sides of industry agreed upon national action plans and presented them at a final conference; practitioners in social partner organisations were trained in social dialogue techniques, vocational training and promotion of the sector's image at national seminars)

Source: Industrial Relations in Europe: 2006, 2008

As follow-up to fruitful and successful experience with the European industry federations (EIFs), this project brought together selected EIFs, the ETUC and the ILO to assess the evolution of sectoral social dialogue in the EU-12 and CC after the enlargements of 2004 and 2007.

This Report is a result of various analyses of: current bipartite and tripartite social dialogue structures and practices; membership trends in sectoral trade unions in the EU-12 and CC; and their capacity to undertake European sectoral social dialogue.

B) Methodology

Empirical data for the Report were collected in three ways:

1. Documentary research – the research specialist reviewed the literature on European sectoral social dialogue to produce a complete overview of scientific input on the subject that supports the analyses presented in the Report.
2. Secondary data – the research specialist exploited available secondary data: reports from the ETUC, the ETUI and the ITC-ILO project reports.
3. Primary data collection through an online survey – an in-depth questionnaire was designed and sent to trade unions organizing workers in the sectors focused upon.

The final report was also based on input from two workshops organised by the ITC-ILO in Turin and Zagreb. These workshops brought together representatives of trade unions from new EU member and candidate countries, the ETUC, the European trade union industrial federations, the European Commission, and other ETUC and ILO experts in the field.

Sectors included in the survey	postal services, telecommunications, construction, tourism, metal, energy, chemistry
Countries covered	Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Romania, Malta, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Questionnaire responses expected	100
Number of responses	57
Rate of questionnaire responses	57 %
Numbers of trade union members covered	1,128,719

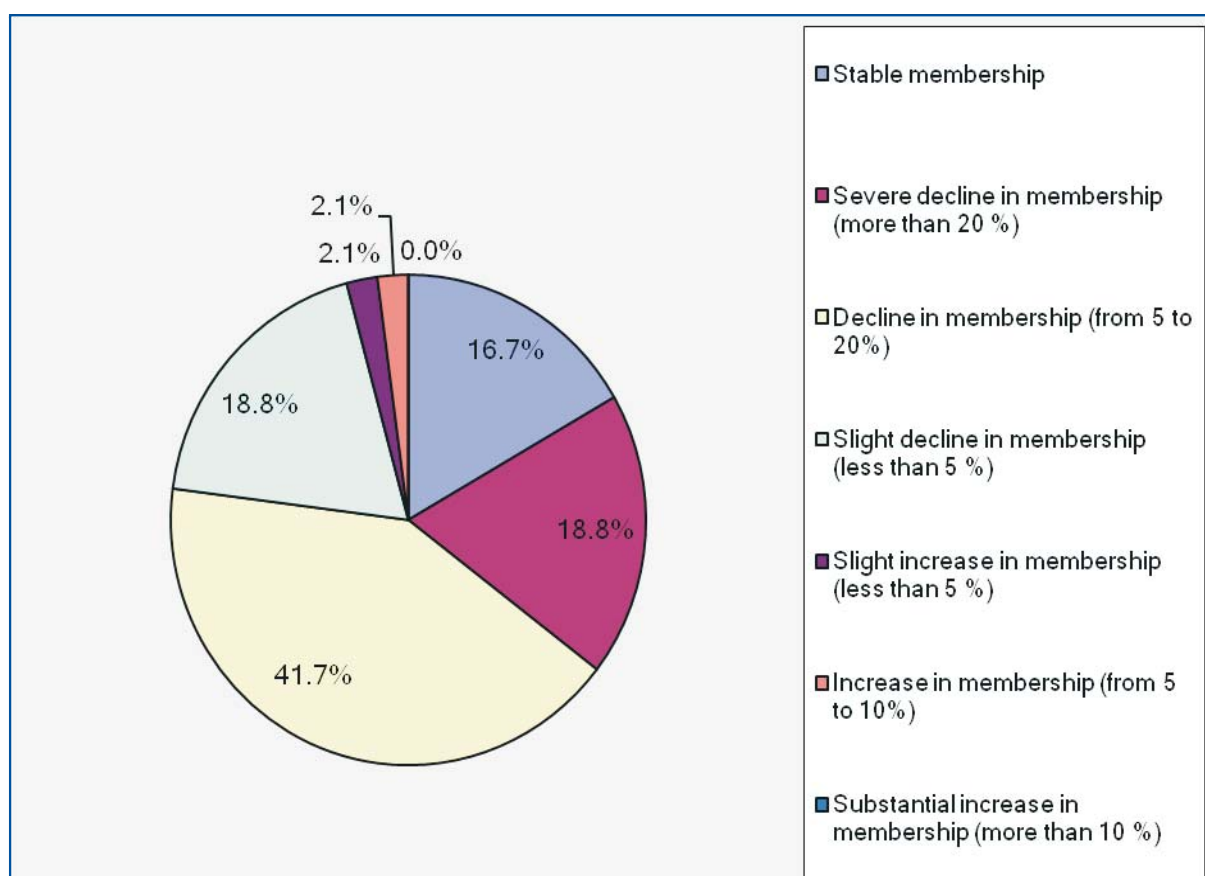
C) The Survey – general information and trends in trade unions

According to the survey⁷ results, the following features are dominant among the chosen sector-level trade unions:

- a) 41.7% reported a decline in membership ranging from 5% to 20% (see chart A). A further 18.8% reported a slight decline in membership (less than 5%), and 18.8% reported a severe decline in membership. Taken together, almost 80% reported a decline in membership. 16.7% reported stable membership, and only 4.2% reported an increase in membership. Decline in membership was a dominant feature, regardless of the nature of the sector involved.

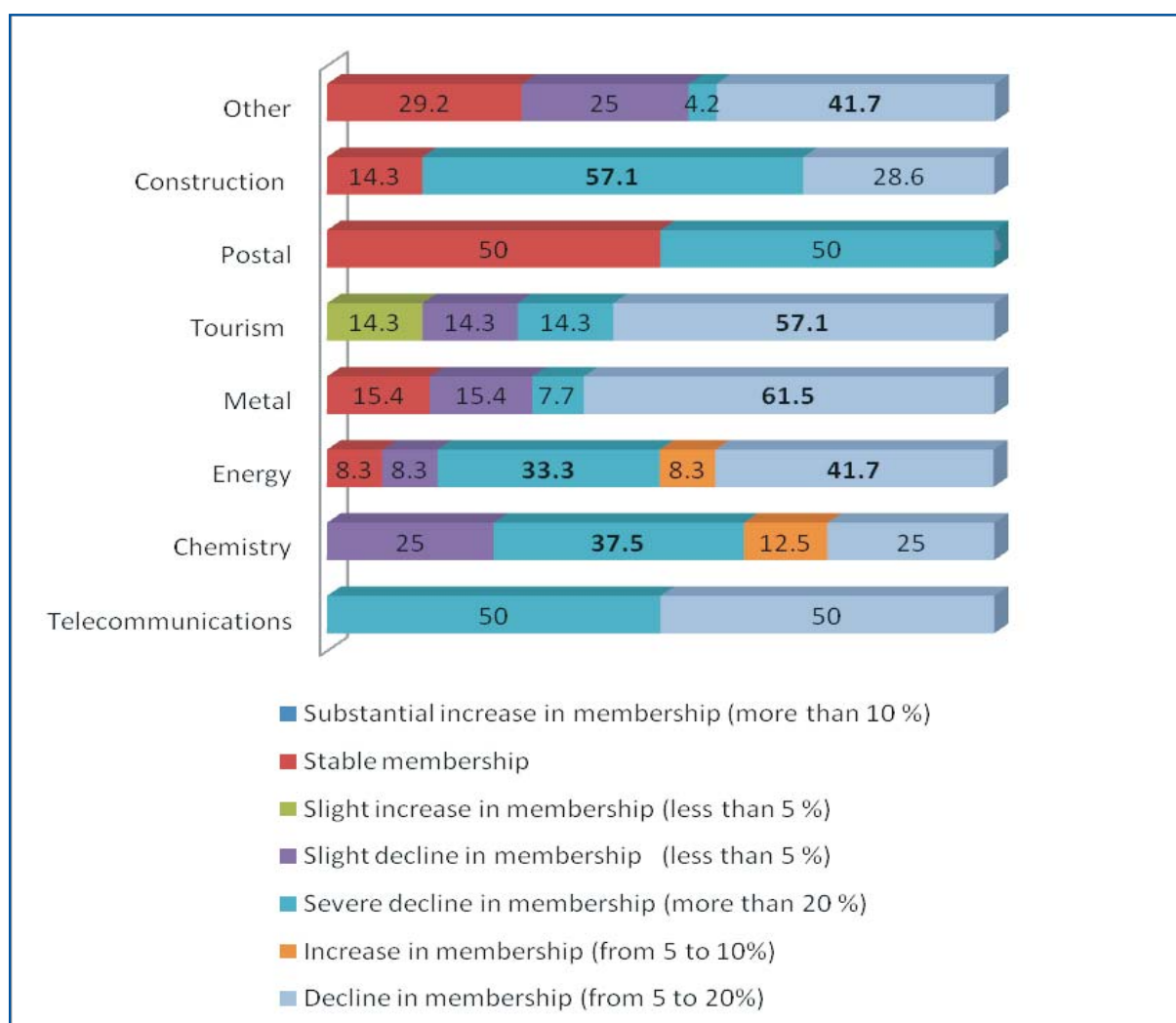
⁷ This survey used an online questionnaire, together with input from transnational seminars in Turin and in Zagreb

Chart A: Membership trends over the last five years



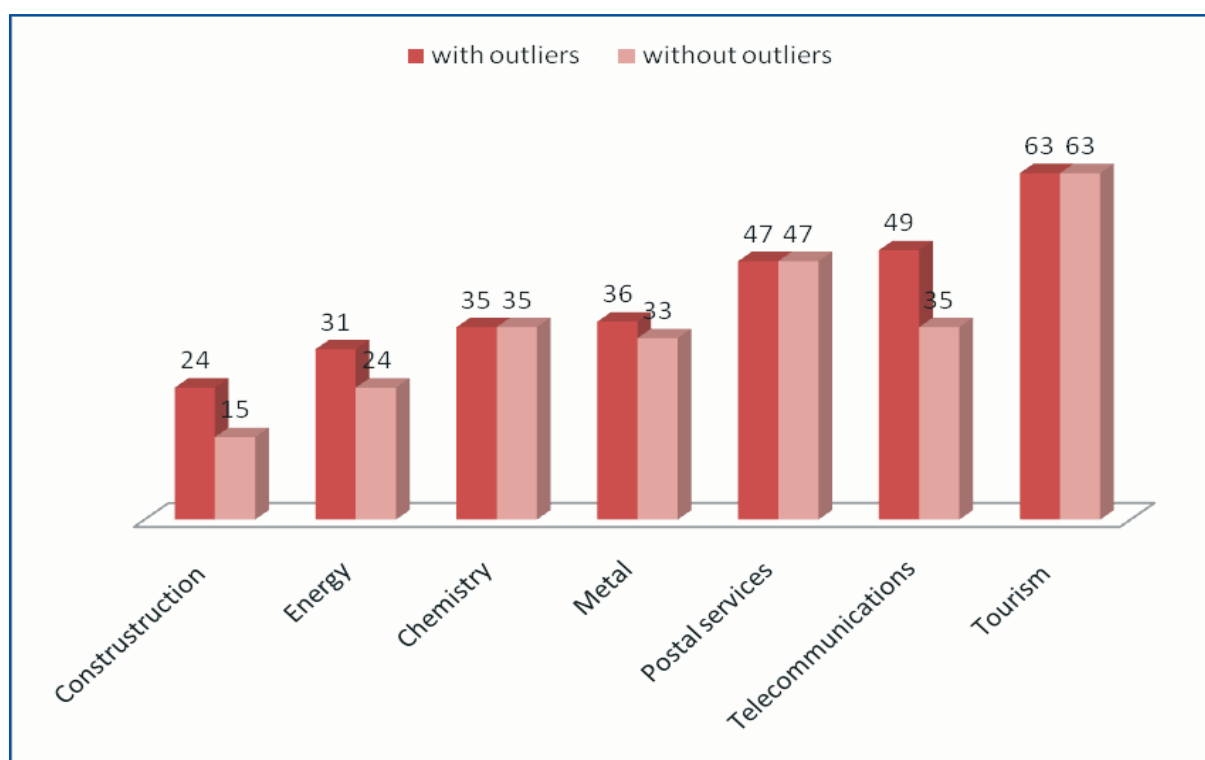
Both labour-intensive sectors, such as tourism and postal services, and technology-intensive sectors, such as chemistry and energy, show a decline in trade union membership (Chart B). There is no clear cut trend in any of the sectors: some trade unions within the same sector are growing, whereas others are losing members. Increases in membership were reported by some unions in the chemistry (12.5%), tourism (14.3%) and energy (8.3%) sectors. Others, in postal services (50%), construction (14.3%), metal (15.4%) and energy (8.3%), reported stable membership. A severe decline in membership (more than 20%) was reported by the construction (57%), telecommunications and postal services (50%), chemistry (37.5%) and energy (33.3%) sectors.

Chart B: Trends in membership in the last five years (selected sectors)



- b) Several analyses of women and young members in the overall body of membership were made with and without statistically atypical data (statistical outliers). Sectors (see Chart C) with an above-average percentage of women members were: tourism (63%), telecommunications (49%) and postal services (47%). Sectors with a below-average percentage of women members (without statistically extremely atypical data) were construction (15%) and energy (24%). As for the percentage of young members (see Annex Chart A1): telecommunications (24%) and chemistry (25%) had the highest percentage of young members and construction (14%) and postal services (15%) the lowest.

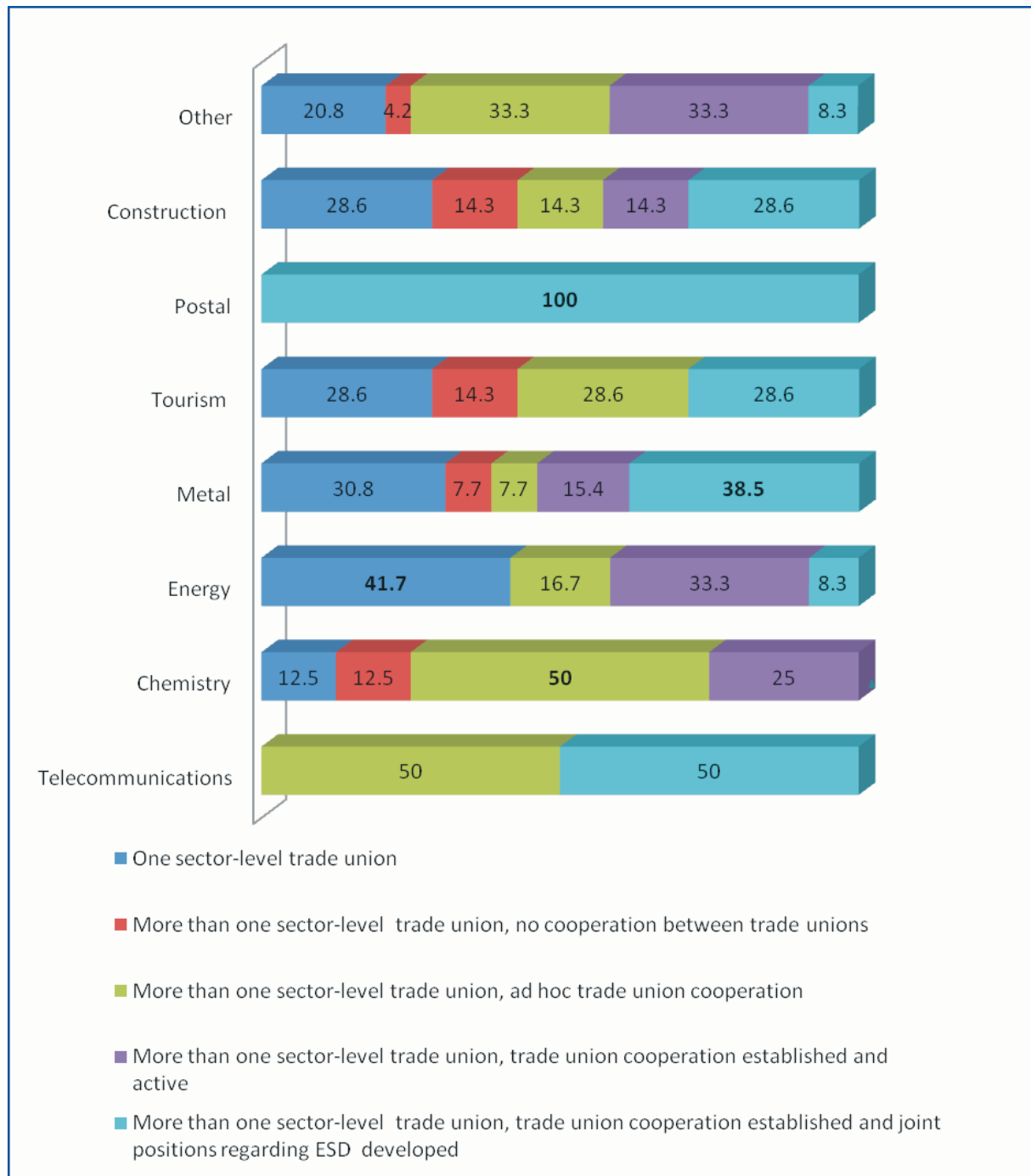
Chart C: Percentage of women trade union members



Note: Two statistical variants are presented: survey results with and without statistical outliers. Statistical outliers are statistical observations, in this case survey replies, that are numerically distant from the rest of the *data* (atypical).

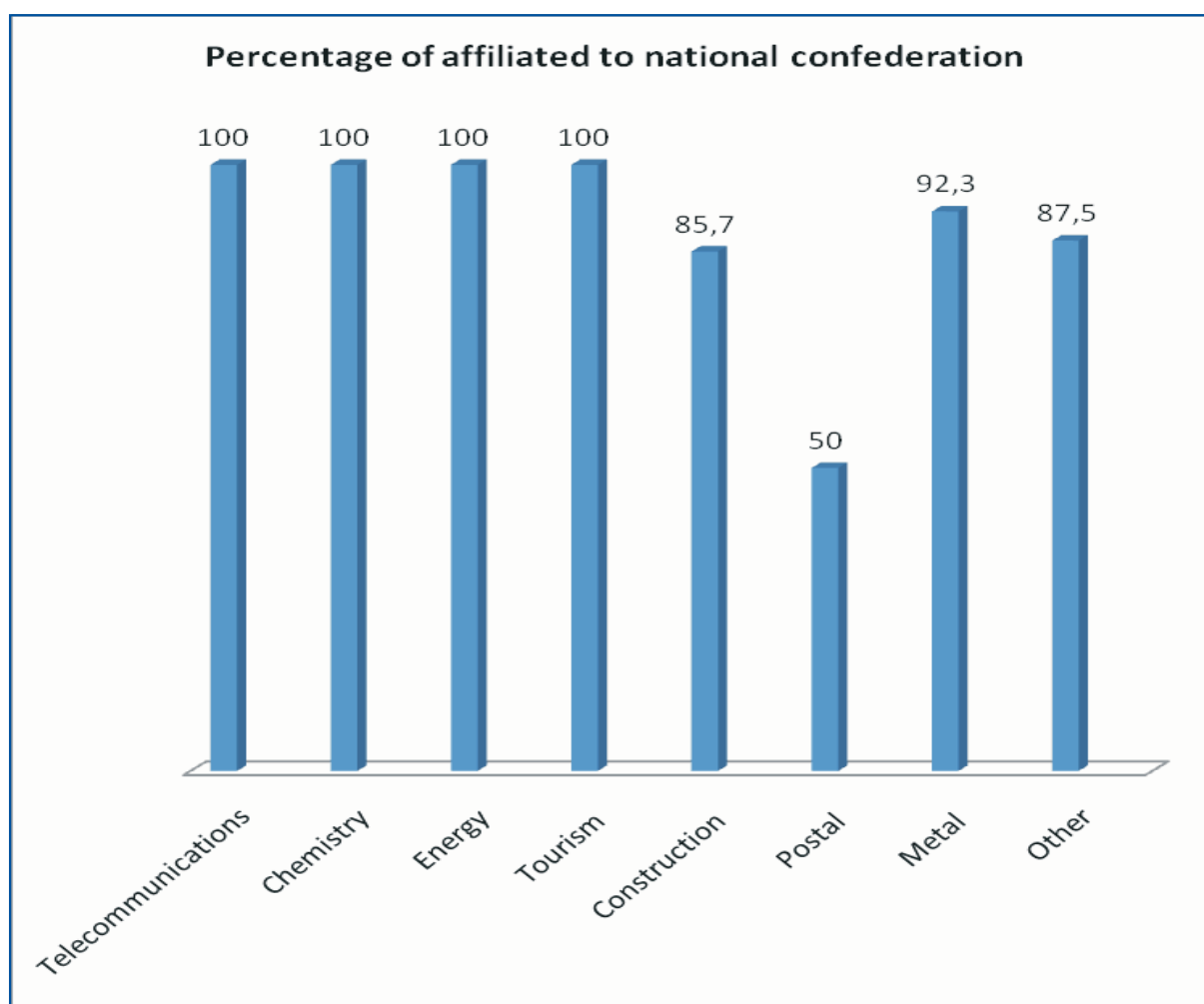
- c) 25% of the unions (see Annex Chart B1) reported that they operated as the single sector-level trade union in their countries. Only 8% reported that there was no cooperation among sector-level trade unions in countries with more than one sector trade union. Two thirds reported that they had some level of cooperation with the other trade unions in their sector. Of these, 12.5% reported that such cooperation enabled them to take joint positions regarding European social dialogue. As Chart D shows, energy (41.7%) and metal (30.8%) reported that they were the single trade union in their sector. Only an average of 10% of the unions in tourism, chemistry, metal and construction reported that they did not cooperate with other trade unions in the same sector.

Chart D: Sector level trade union scene (in percentages)



d) 98.3% of the unions replied that they were affiliated to their national trade union confederations. 57% replied that they had a representative on a European works council. In telecommunications, tourism and construction, more that 80% replied that they were involved in the work of EWCs (see Annex Table A1).

Chart E: Trade unions affiliated to national confederations (in %)



- e) 58% of the trade unions surveyed had found changes in work organization that made working conditions (wages, working hours) and employment relationships more flexible and work-related negotiations more individual to be the dominant feature in determining the future of their sector or industry. Other features identified as important were: changes in global production, delocalisation and outsourcing (29.2%), privatisation and subcontracting (27.1%), changes in technology resulting in lower and more specialized demand for workers (25%), and changes in consumption patterns (22.9%). Table A shows sector-specific differences. Those replies show the sensitivity of trade unions to the agents of change in their sector, especially those that are the subject of European social dialogue. 87.5% of the trade unions surveyed in the chemistry sector outlined work organization changes as the determining feature. In contrast, those in the telecommunications sector found the working regime changes to be rather insignificant. All those in the telecommunications and postal services replied that they assumed that changes in global production, delocalisation and outsourcing would be the main agents shaping the future of their sectors. Tourism, an industry based on location and resources, and chemistry, an industry with a high technology and capital base, attached less importance to that issue. The trade unions in construction pointed to privatization and subcontracting as the most important issues for the future. Changes in technology were

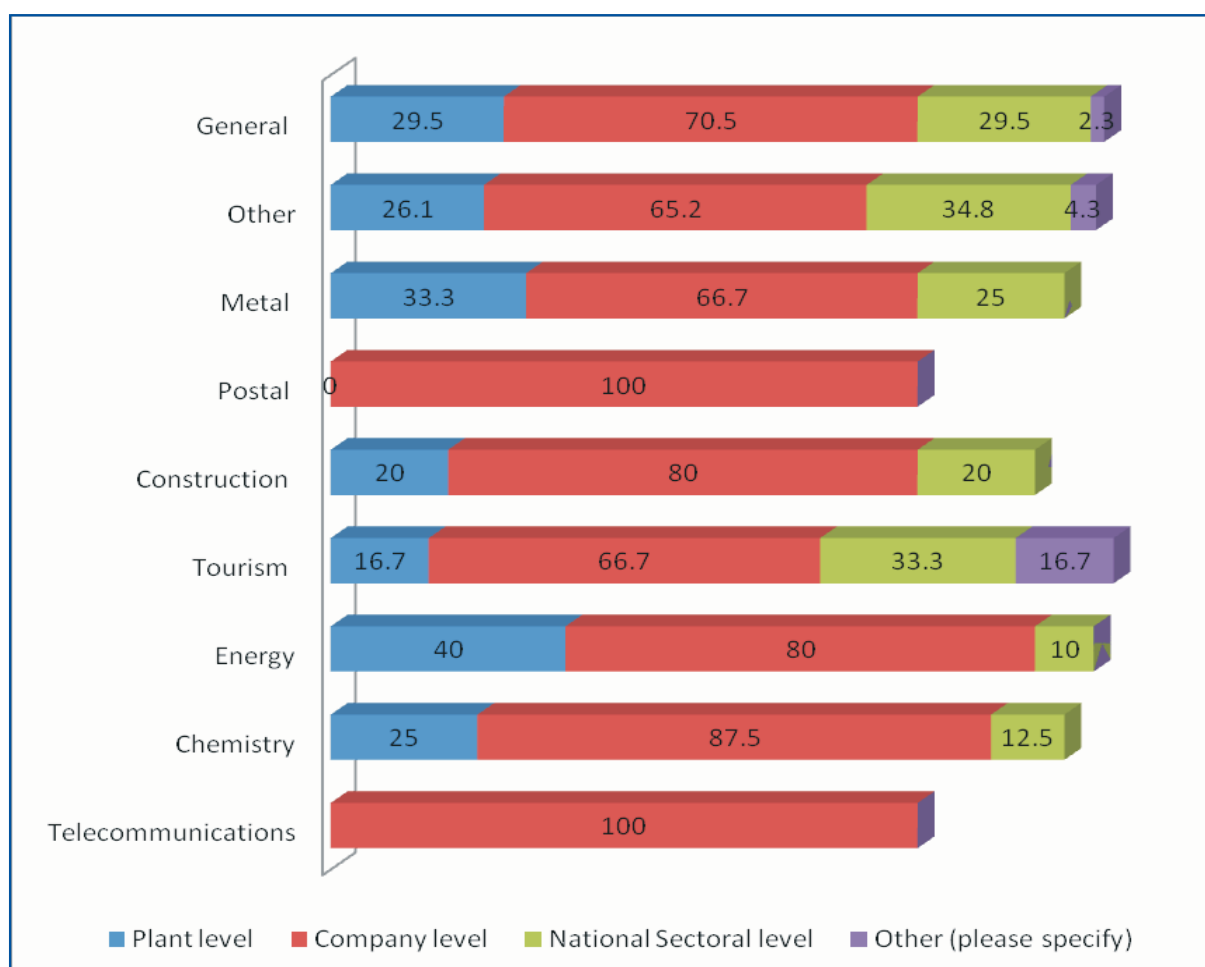
deemed an important shaping factor in the following technology-based sectors: chemistry, metal and energy. Trade unions in telecommunications, tourism and construction showed an above-average interest in future consumption patterns changes.

Table A: Opinions on the most important trends determining the future of sectors (in percentages)

Key economic features for the future of the sector	Telecommunications	Energy	Metal	Tourism	Postal	Construction	Chemistry	Other
Privatisation and subcontracting	0	25	0	28.6	0	57.1	0	20.8
Changes in technology, resulting in lower and more specialized demand for workers	0	33.3	46.2	28.6	0	0	37.5	20.8
Changes in work organization that make working conditions (wages, working hours) and employment relationships more flexible and work-related negotiations more individual	0	66.7	53.8	57.1	50	57.1	87.5	66.7
Changes in global production, delocalisation and outsourcing	100	41.7	61.5	14.3	100	42.9	37.5	20.8
Changes in consumption market / consumers buying less of the sector's products and services	50	8.3	23.1	42.9	50	42.9	12.5	20.8

- f) 70.5% of the trade unions reported that company-level collective bargaining was the dominant level of collective bargaining in their countries. Both plant-level collective bargaining and national-level collective bargaining were said by 30% of the trade unions surveyed to be the dominant level of collective bargaining. Plant-level collective bargaining was reported as important by trade unions in metal (40%) and energy (33.3%). National-level collective bargaining was deemed a very prominent mode of collective bargaining by trade unions in tourism (33.3%).

Chart F: Dominant levels of collective bargaining in sectors (in percentages)



D) National and European social dialogue

One research task was to investigate links between features of national social dialogue and sectoral trade union involvement in ESD. A set of questions was devised to investigate the quality of national social dialogue. Table B shows that the majority (50% and 52%) reported that both tripartite social dialogue and bipartite social dialogue were more of a formality than a real way of managing economic changes and sector-level restructuring. The exceptions are feedback received from postal and telecommunications unions that both modes of social dialogues had been used effectively. Similar feedback was given by trade unions in the energy sector.

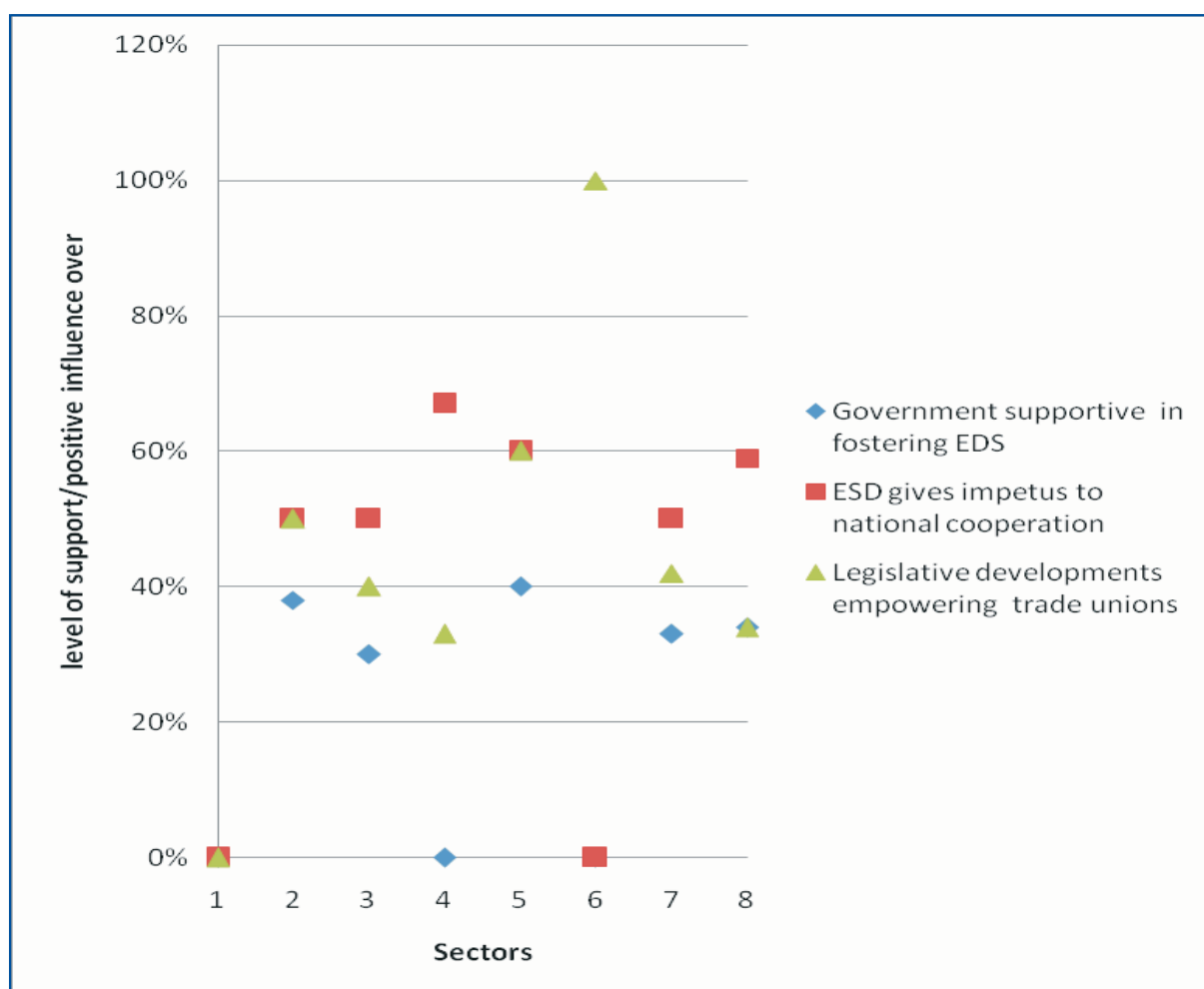
Trade unions from all the sectors surveyed reported that governments in their countries only consulted them formally before taking new initiatives regarding social affairs connected with ESD or sector matters connected with ESD. This is very important for the study of the quality of new EU members' and candidate counties' social dialogue, and their involvement in ESD in particular. Failure to be properly involved in the implementation phase at national level will certainly affect all the other phases of their involvement in ESD.

Table B: Quality of social dialogue matrix

Sectors / dominant social dialogue feature	Tripartite social dialogue as the way of managing economic change and sector-level restructuring	Bipartite social dialogue as the way of managing economic change and sector-level restructuring	Government consults social partners before taking new initiatives on social affairs connected with ESD	Government consults social partners before taking new initiatives on sectoral matters connected with ESD	Quality of social dialogue in general at the national level
Telecommunications	Only formally (100%)	Yes, in practice (100%)	Only formally (100%)	Only formally (100%)	Formal dialogue (100%)
Tourism	No dominant feature (33% yes/formally/ no)	No dominant feature (50% yes/formally)	Only formally (50%)	No dominant feature (50% formally/no)	No dominant feature (50% good/formal)
Construction	Only formally (60%)	Only formally (60%)	Only formally (80%)	Only formally (60%)	Formal dialogue (60%)
Chemistry	Only formally (50%)	Only formally (50%)	Only formally (63%)	No (63%)	Formal dialogue (75%)
Postal	Yes, in practice (100%)	Yes, in practice (100%)	Only formally (100%)	Only formally (100%)	Good dialogue (100%)
Metal	Only formally (58%)	Only formally (58%)	Only formally (42%)	No dominant feature (42% formally/no)	Formal dialogue (42%)
Energy	Only formally (70%)	Yes, in practice (50%)	Only formally (50%)	Only formally (50%)	Formal dialogue (60%)
Other	Only formally (52%)	Only formally (65%)	Only formally (57%)	Only formally (57%)	Formal dialogue (52%)
General	Only formally (52%)	Only formally (50%)	Only formally (55%)	Only formally (47%)	Formal (57%)

Additional layers of analysis were performed to investigate the climate of social dialogue, the roles and bargaining powers of trade unions at national level, the quality of relations between ESD and the general level of social partners' national cooperation (see Chart G). Formality was reported as the key feature in the quality of national social dialogue. The majority (60%) of trade unions surveyed reported that they found that ESD gave impetus to national cooperation. ESD was seen as a powerful vehicle for boosting national-level social dialogue. One third of the surveyed unions reported that legislative changes had empowered trade unions in national social dialogue.

Chart G: Government and social dialogue



Key:

- 1.) Telecommunications
- 2.) Chemistry
- 3.) Energy
- 4.) Tourism
- 5.) Construction
- 6.) Postal services
- 7.) Metal
- 8.) General

One third of the parties surveyed reported that their governments had fostered ESD. At the sectoral level, unions in chemistry, construction and metal reported positive links between government fostering ESD, legislative empowerment of trade unions and ESD's potential to give impetus to national cooperation. Trade unions emphasized the following as the main problems related to the implementation of sector-level ESD or the application of joint standards and principles: an overall low level of social dialogue and industrial relations (including disrespect for existing collective bargaining agreements), together with a poorly designed institutional framework with weak labour and social dialogue institutions (labour administration, social

dialogue secretariats) and inappropriate or non-existent representation rules. They also reported social dialogue and ESD processes as being lengthy and complicated, which required close cooperation and target-oriented common action by the social partners at national or sectoral level. Other factors were weak legal obligations on information, consultation and participation, and social dialogue not being encouraged by the government or through legislation. Lack of sectoral employers' organizations, absence of employers' interest in being involved in EU-level sector projects and lack of initiative on the union side to put the pressure on the government to resolve the situation were further distinct features of the social dialogue context, as other social dialogue investigations have found. Some highlighted the lack of tradition in this field and the lack of staff able to summarize ESD recommendations. They pointed out inadequate channels of information (ESD information not reaching the appropriate audience), and the government's tendency to postpone implementation until it is formally pressed to do so by EU institutions.

The following suggestions were made for better implementation of ESD outcomes and results: enforcing the overall social dialogue legislative and institutional context; more involvement of employers in EU projects at sectoral level; an effective system of penalties for non-compliance with ESD; structural reforms in trade unions to empower them to participate fully as social partners at national level; provision of up-to-date information about ESD in the national language(s); strengthening the employers' side and forcing it to act as a partner at the sector level; and better cooperation with ESD members at national level. This would mean more sharing and dissemination of information, and EU institutions exerting more pressure on local authorities, for it is obvious that in the majority of cases when national social dialogue does not work, only this top-down political approach is effective.

E) Capacity to engage in ESD

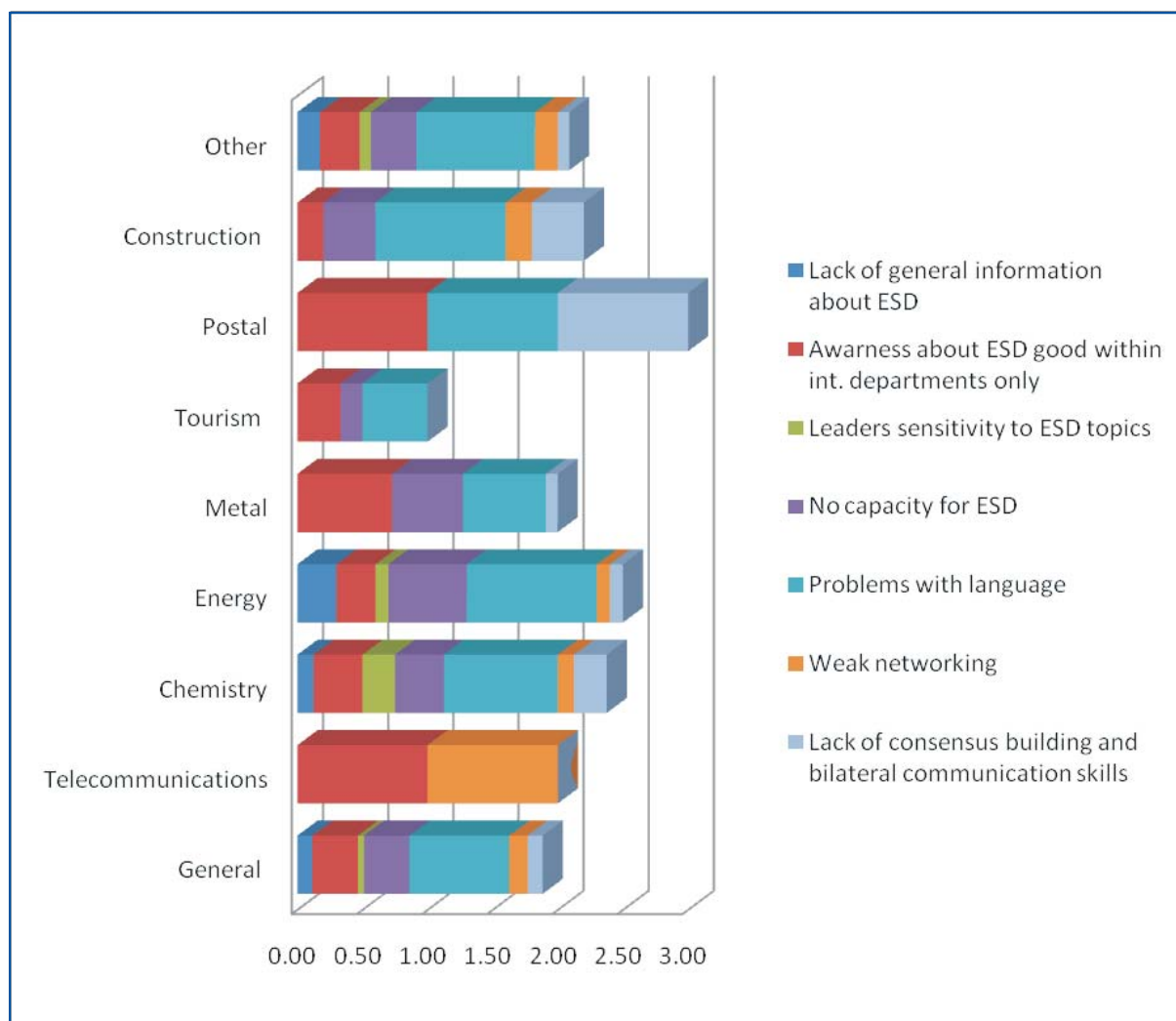
The final part of the survey scanned the capacities related to ESD of selected sectoral trade unions in the EU-12 and candidate countries. The unions reported on their general understanding of ESD content and processes, on the quality of their participation in ESD, their absorption capacity and limitations on their being actively involved in ESD, support they had received from their EU trade union federations and communication strengths and weaknesses in relation to ESD. This involved information about their ESD-related identity, ESD ownership and communication on ESD matters with their members. Finally, we used a questionnaire to investigate the ESD topic areas in which sector-level trade unions had been most actively involved (implementation areas) and the areas they were most interested in. They pointed out that topic sensitivity was vital for the future of their sectors and also provided us with input on their training needs.

A near-majority (46%) of trade unions surveyed had a proper understanding of what ESD stands for (see Annex Chart D1). 23% replied that they understood ESD as a consultation process only, and 18% thought that ESD meant EU Commission discussions forums. They reported (see Annex Table B1) that in the majority of cases (58%) they knew the differences among tripartite social dialogue, bipartite cross-sector social dialogue and bipartite sectoral social dialogue in the EU, and that they grasped the content of ESD work (54%). Lack of understanding, or partial

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understanding, was reported in relation to forms and procedures, namely understanding how the ESD bodies work and what the differences are among ESD guidelines, framework agreements and joint declarations. Finally, the major problem evident from the replies is an insufficient understanding of ESD by trade union members (81%).

Chart H: Capacity limitations related to ESD



Regarding capacities, they indicated a need to be more actively and effectively involved with ESD (see Chart H). They also highlighted a problem with language (77% reported it to be the main problem). Thus, the lack of language skills is by far the most severe obstacle and hence the weakest link in their ESD-related capacities. The second biggest barriers were: lack of capacity in regard to both the content and the procedures of ESD sector-level dialogue (33%) and awareness of ESD and inappropriate dissemination of ESD-related information to the entire organization and to their members (33%). **So, basically the barriers lie in external (language) and international communication (dissemination of ESD related information to members) and internal capacities (insufficient knowledge about forms and processes).**

Limitations on ESD-related communication efforts (see Annex Chart E1) also lie primarily in the language problem (65%), which means a need for translation and interpretation. There is also a

lack of resources for communication activities (49%) and a lack of skill in developing basic ESD sector-related channels and procedures for information and dissemination (23%).

When asked about the main impediments to being more actively involved in ESD work at the European level, the vast majority (69%) of trade unions replied that they lacked both the financial and the human resources (see Annex Chart F1) to do so. As for their future contribution, 30% replied that they would be willing to dedicate more time to ESD-related work (Annex Chart G1). 53% said that they were partially satisfied with the level and the quality of support they had received from their European industry federations, and 47% said they were fully satisfied (see Annex Table C1). 42% identified themselves as fully accepted within ESD processes, and 39% stated that they could have been more active in the past. When asked about the appropriateness of European industry federations' instruments for involving them in ESD processes, 65% responded positively.

Minimizing the scope and mitigating the effects of trade union proliferation and fragmentation (also harmful competition) at the sectoral level

The trade union scene in new EU member and candidate countries shows proliferation and fragmentation⁸, which adversely affects trade unions' dialoguing strength. Sectoral trade unions involved in this survey emphasized the rather weak role of trade unions in national social dialogue at sectoral level and insufficiently developed co-ordination procedures among sectoral trade unions regarding ESD. Political and economic changes, and the vibrancy of democratic forces that started to reshape the EU-12 and candidate countries twenty years ago, soon exerted their influence on industrial democracy. Unfortunately, pluralism, which is of genuine importance to trade union democracy, in some cases gave excuses for the proliferation and fragmentation of trade unions, which is extremely harmful to them and to labour in general, since it weakens the role of labour in industrial relations and deprives trade unions of their representative status. Moreover, it often goes hand in hand with unlawful trade union competition (competition for membership dues), exhausting trade unions financially, leaving them without resources and basically unable to perform their primary tasks. The proliferation and fragmentation of trade unions undermines their effectiveness, representativeness and credibility, both on the national plane and at the sectoral level. Competing trade unions find themselves in a weak position and often oppose each other in negotiations. This creates an opportunity for employers and governments to exploit such divisions and rivalries to their advantage. Consequently, proliferation and fragmentation involve trade unions in a vicious circle of "institutional deprivation", ending in political weakness and social irrelevance.

Annex supplement B provides in-depth information about the topical interests of selected sector trade unions.

As Chart I shows, in the past these were: working conditions (56%), occupational health and safety (56%), quality of social dialogue (47%), working time (40%) and vocational education (35%).

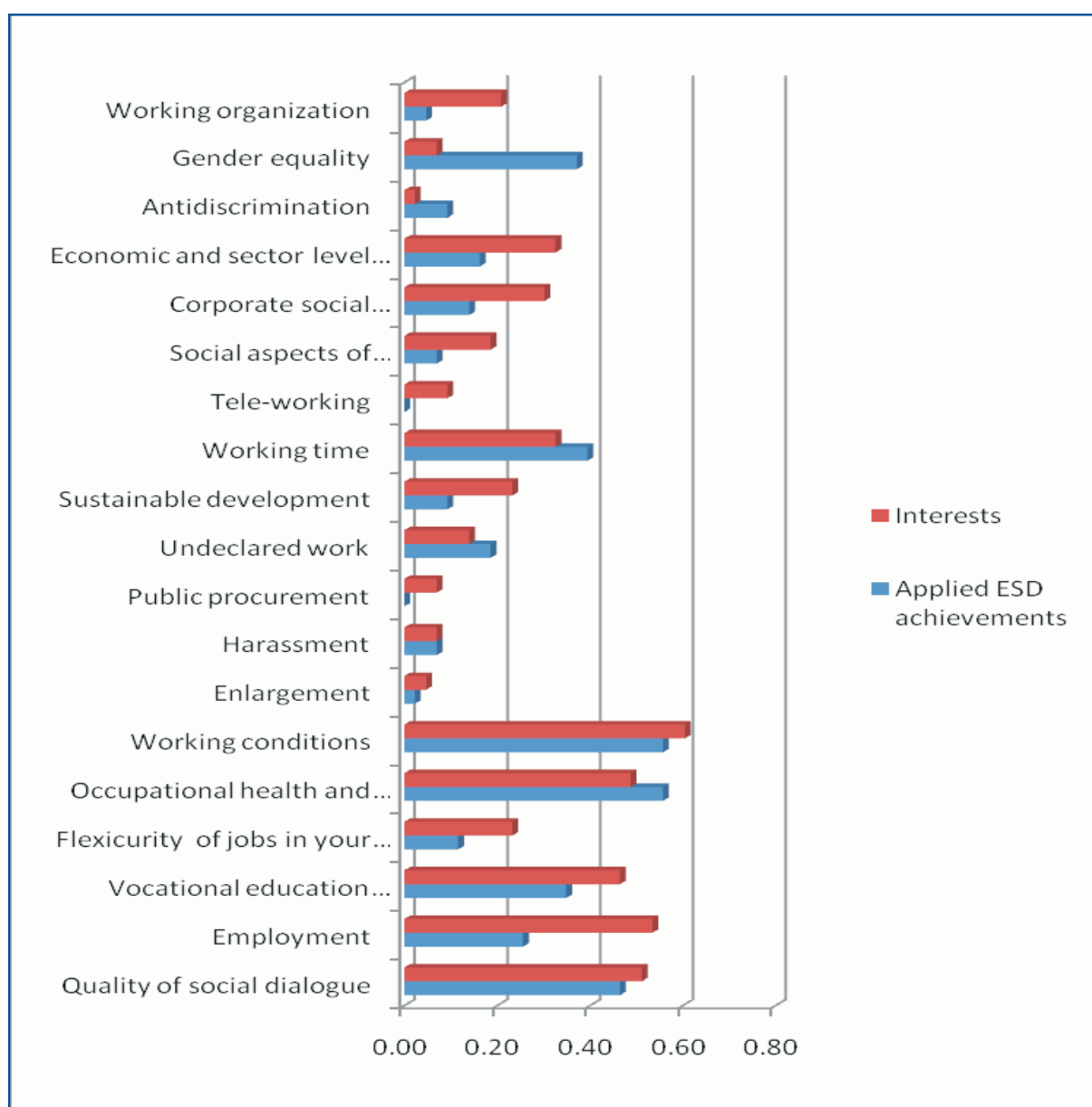
The areas of greatest interest related to ESD are somewhat similar: working conditions (61%), occupational health and safety (49%) and quality of social dialogue (51%). Minor interest is shown in working time (33%) but more in vocational education (47%).

⁸ Cox T. and Mason B., *Trends and development in east central European industrial relations*, Industrial Relations Journal 31:2, p.11

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New areas of interest are: working organization, economic and sector-level industrial policies, corporate social responsibility, social aspects of Community policies and sustainable development.

Chart I: Topical areas – application of the achievements of European sectoral social dialogue to the national environment and areas of interest (in percentages)



F) Conclusions and ways forward

In the past five years, a decline in trade union membership in the selected sectors in EU-12 and candidate countries has been the dominant feature, regardless of the nature of the sector involved in the survey. 70.5% of the trade unions reported that the company was the dominant level of collective bargaining in their countries. The majority reported that both tripartite and bipartite social dialogue in their countries are formal in nature and not perceived or used as a real way of managing economic change and sector-level restructuring. Trade unions from all the sectors surveyed reported that governments in their countries only consult them formally before taking new initiatives concerning social affairs connected with ESD or sector matters connected with ESD. On the other hand, the majority (60%) of trade unions surveyed reported that they find that ESD gives impetus to national cooperation and national social dialogue. Only one third reported that their governments had fostered ESD. At the sector level, trade unions from chemistry, construction and metal reported more or less positive links between government support in fostering ESD, legislative empowering of trade unions and ESD's potential to give impetus to national cooperation.

The following suggestions were made for improving social dialogue and ESD at the national level. They could be a means of upgrading the national social dialogue systems:

- enforcing the overall legislative and institutional context of social dialogue
- more involvement of employers in EU projects at the sectoral level
- enforcement of a system of penalties for non-compliance with ESD
- structural reform of sector-level trade unions to empower them to participate fully as social partners at national level
- provision of up-to-date information about ESD in the national language(s)
- strengthening the employers' side and obliging it to act as a partner at the sectoral level
- better cooperation among all parties involved with ESD at national level (needed for better sharing of information)
- EU institutions exerting more pressure on local authorities. The majority of reported cases show that when national social dialogue does not work, only this top-down political approach is effective.

Lack of understanding or partial understanding of ESD legal forms and procedures was reported, specifically about how ESD bodies work and the differences among ESD guidelines, framework agreements and joint declarations. However, the major problem to emerge from the replies is insufficient understanding of ESD by trade unions members overall (81%). This feedback should be valuable to all support-providers: EU bodies, trade union federations and agencies such as ILO.

Reported barriers to being more effectively involved with ESD relate to external (language) and international communication (dissemination of ESD-related information to trade union members) and to internal capacities (insufficient knowledge of forms and processes). The majority (69%) of the trade unions surveyed replied that they lack both the financial and the

human resources needed for them to become more actively involved in ESD-related activities. They showed notable interest in areas new to them: work organization, economic and sector-level industrial policy, corporate social responsibility, social aspects of Community policies and sustainable development.

Several short-term and long-term measures should be taken to strengthen the capacities of the unions:

- strengthening trade unions, in general, in new EU and candidate countries by helping them with new recruitment campaigns
- projects for young members and leaders
- projects to give women a more powerful voice in trade union structures in new EU member and candidate countries
- regional co-operation should be established in the sectors where there is no history of such co-operation
- both formal and informal education should be developed, with new curricula being designed and used.

Broad-based political support by EU-level trade union federations, EU commission bodies, the ILO and labour-related think tanks such as the ETUI for the sector level trade unions could be crucial to their playing their national role, especially where the government is either unable to foster national social dialogue and ESD-related dialogue or passive in doing so.

Focused assistance for sector-level trade unions is needed in three fields:

- education about ESD-related procedures
- education about the topics on which interest was expressed (especially new ones)
- projects that strengthen their skill in communicating with the outside world (including language training)
- projects that strengthen their skill in communicating with their members.

The ETUC should be the focal point. It should take a leading role, together with European industry federations and ILO policy and training assistance vehicles (the ITC-ILO). It would add value if the ILO were involved in the planning and execution of mission and project activities. The ETUC is the only social partner representing workers at the European inter-professional level. It has a unique place on the European industrial relations scene, comparative advantages and know-how on upgrading the ability of trade unions in new EU member countries and candidate countries to engage in social dialogue.

About the ETUC

The ETUC exists to speak with a single voice, on behalf of the common interests of workers, at European level. Founded in 1973, the ETUC represents 82 trade union organisations in 36 European countries and 12 industry-based federations.

The ETUC's prime objective is to promote the European Social Model and to work for the development of a united Europe of peace and stability where working people and their families can enjoy full human and civil rights and high living standards. The **European Social Model** embodies a society combining sustainable economic growth with ever-improving living and working standards, including full employment, social protection, equal opportunities, good quality jobs, social inclusion, and an open and democratic policy-making process that involves citizens fully in the decisions that affect them.

The ETUC believes that workers' consultation, collective bargaining, social dialogue and good working conditions are key to promoting innovation, productivity, competitiveness and growth in Europe.

The ETUC negotiates **with the employers at European level** through the "European social dialogue". This is mirrored in the social dialogue, in 40 different industrial sectors so far, coordinated by the **European Industry Federations**. Following formal EU recognition of the Social Partners' right to negotiate framework agreements at European level, the ETUC has signed three **cross-sectoral European framework agreements** with its European employer counterparts, which have been ratified by the Council of Ministers and implemented as Directives: on parental leave (1996), part-time work (1997), and fixed-term contracts (1999). Trade unions and employers themselves are implementing further European-level deals under the system of 'autonomous' social dialogue, covering conditions for **teleworkers** (2002), **work-related stress** (2004), **harassment and violence at work** (2007) and on **inclusive labour markets** (2010). Finally, the signing of **frameworks of action such as the framework of actions for the life-long learning development of competencies and qualifications** (2002) and **for equality between men and women** (2005) should be emphasised.

Internal dialoguing strengths of sectoral trade unions – aimed at minimizing the scope and mitigating the effects of internal trade union proliferation and fragmentation (and also at tackling harmful competition)

Cooperation is a key word when it comes to enabling dialogue. The future strength and relevance of the trade union movement depends more than ever on its willingness and capacity to join forces and focus on common objectives. Measures to increase awareness of the benefits of social dialogue (ESD in particular) and to improve cooperation and coordination among the social partners will help avoid competitive situations. Changes do not arise out of nowhere. Changes take time, they take resources, they require shifts in leadership style and they involve gradually establishing new bonds (especially when trade unions are proliferating and fragmenting). A unification agenda, as ILO policies often insist, will also strengthen the core of trade unions at the sectoral level through ESD. Rebuilding trust and interconnectivity, joining both forces and sharing resources, will thus become a reality. In general, projects and education should promote trade union cooperation at all levels. Cooperation to minimize the damaging effects of

proliferation and fragmentation, and to consolidate trade unions at the sectoral level, could be pursued through:

- A) Structural unity (institutional set-up) or unity in action (project set-up).
- B) Coordination and joint action in planning and implementing EU-level programmes for trade unions. Training activities for selected leaders/shop stewards/secretariat staff have a very important potential role in the coordinating process.
- C) Sectoral-level trade union unity and rebuilding of their internal dialoguing strength, seen as a process. It cannot be imposed or decreed. The objective of more structural unity at the sector level in the course of ESD-related processes could be further stimulated via education and awareness-raising events by international association and organizations.
- D) Launching models of sharing resources. Human capital in trade unions is their most valuable capital. The dialogue strength of sectoral trade unions is connected with their ability to attract and retain skilful staff. Faced with a scarcity of internal resources, as reported by this survey, trade unions could try getting involved in co-financed shared staff schemes. A pilot project could be a good way.
- E) Training and trainer-training programmes abroad through ESD travel grants.
- F) Legislative changes that help overcome the fragmentation of trade unions.
- G) A mentoring approach to developing sectoral capacities and skills: negotiation, communication, information technology, language, management, legal issues, economics – stimulated by the ETUC and European industry federations and provided by sectoral trade unions from countries with a strong tradition of sector-level social dialogue.

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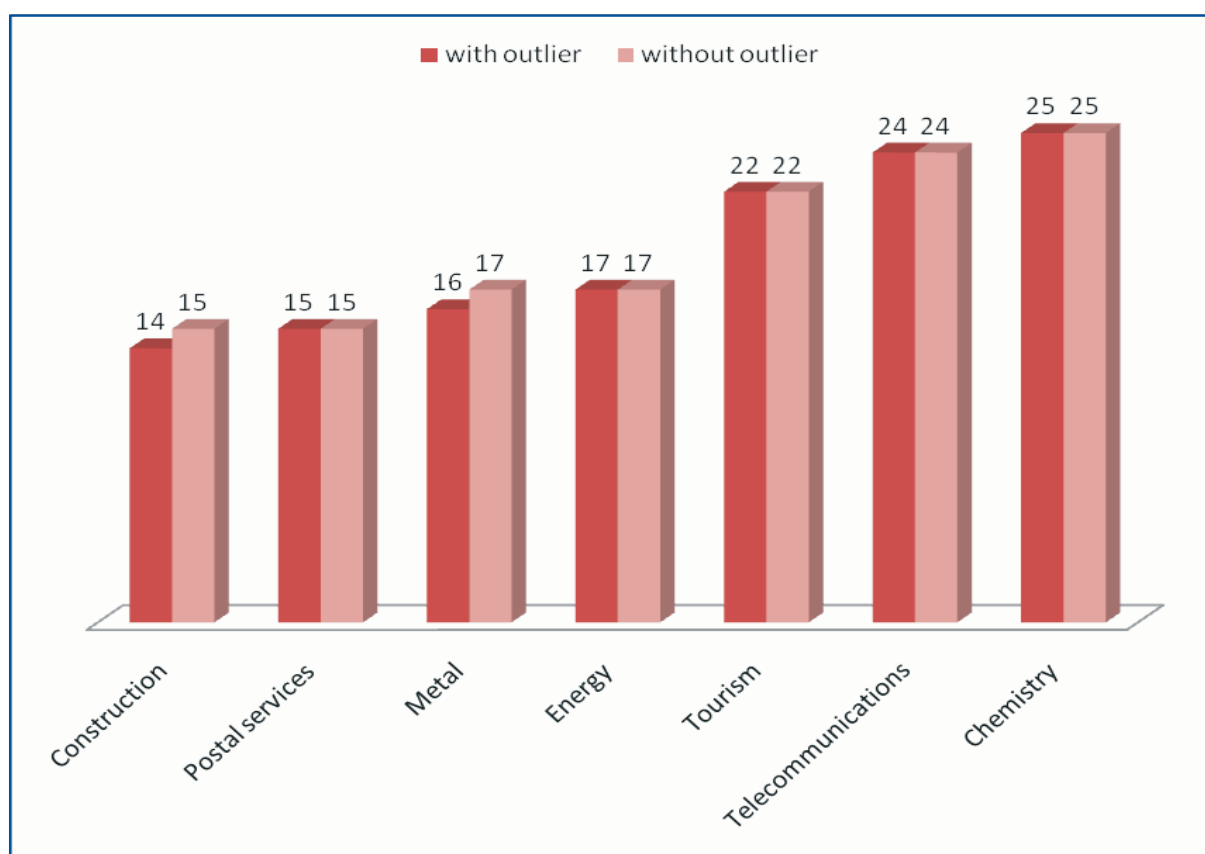
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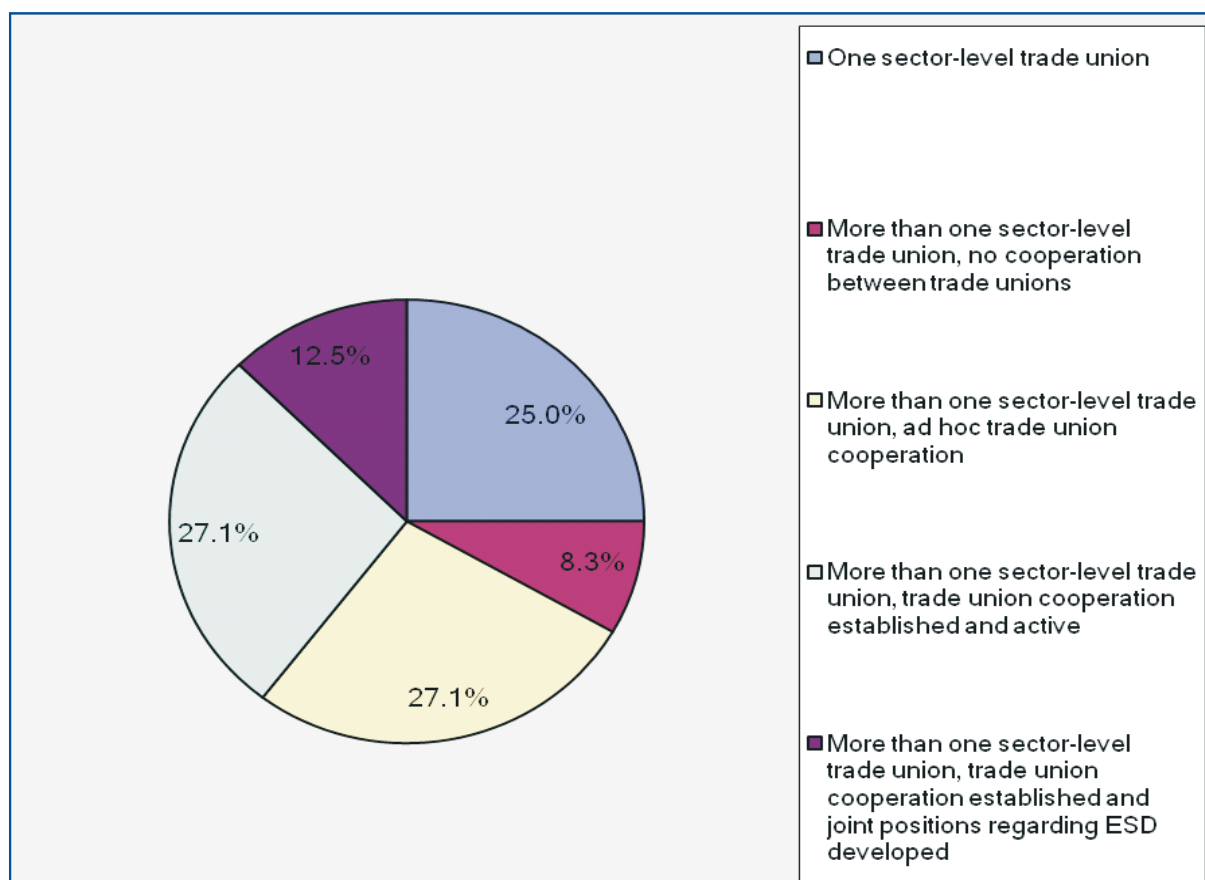
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ANNEX A

Chart A1: Percentage of TU youth members



Note: Two statistical variants are presented: with and without outliers. Statistical outliers are observations, in this case survey replies, that are numerically distant from the rest of the data.

Chart B1: A general picture of the trade union scene in selected sectors**Table A1: Involvement in European works councils**

Sectors/participation in EWCs	No	Yes	Examples
<i>Telecommunications</i>	0 %	100 %	Deutsche Telekom EWC, as an observer
<i>Tourism</i>	17 %	83 %	Hilton, Intercontinental
<i>Construction</i>	20 %	80 %	“Paroc”, “YIT Kausta”
<i>Chemistry</i>	37 %	62 %	as observers in MOL EWC, Continental, GSK, Michelin, Suez-GDF, Akzo-Nobel, Sanofi-Aventis, MOL, SaraLee, ENI, Eon, Alcoa
<i>Postal</i>	100 %	0 %	
<i>Metal</i>	33 %	67 %	Volkswagen group
<i>Energy</i>	50 %	50 %	as observers in MOL EWC, Fortum, Alstom, Veolia
<i>General</i>	43 %	57 %	

Chart C1: Surveyed opinions on the most important trends determining the future of sectors: a general picture

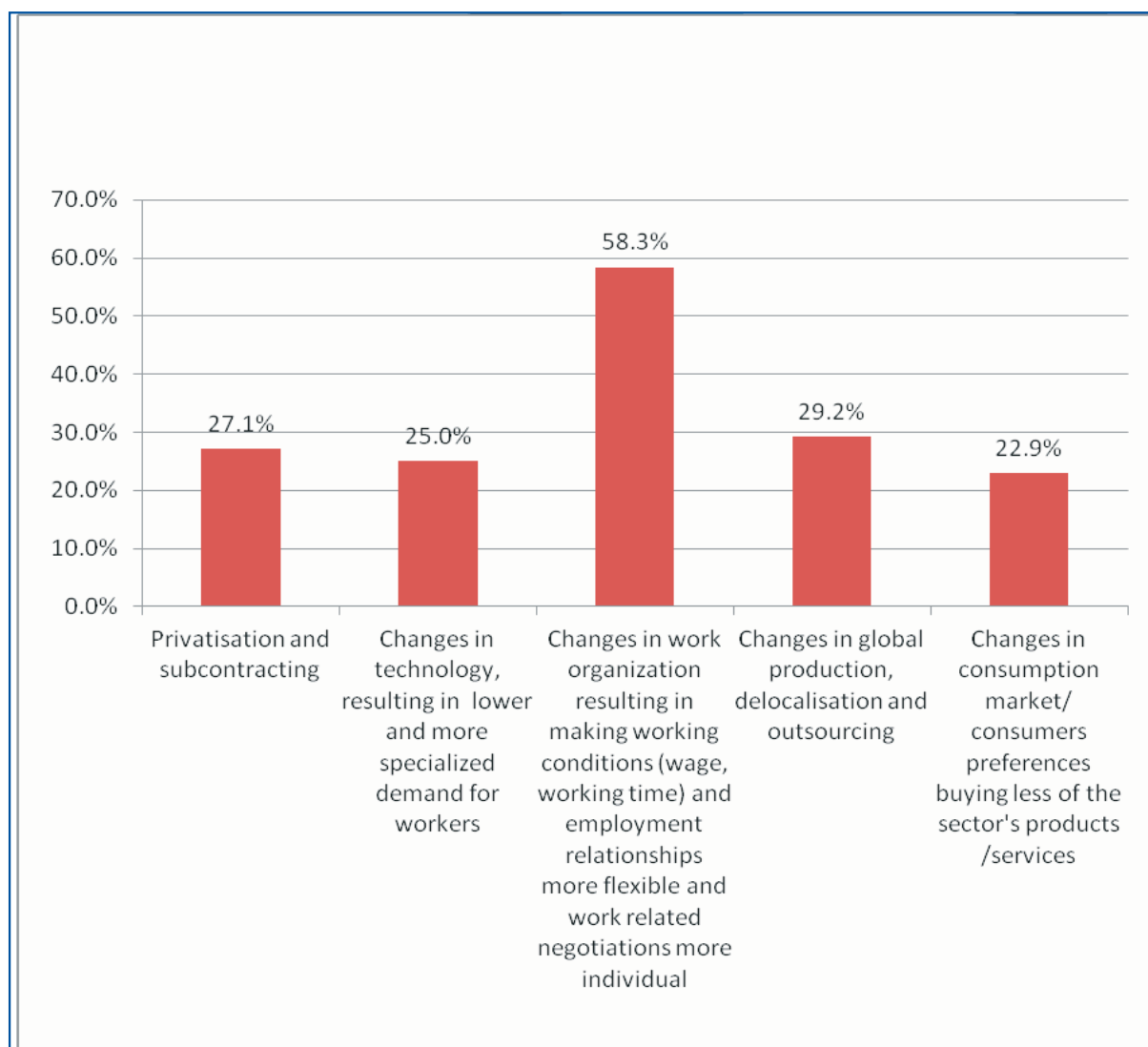
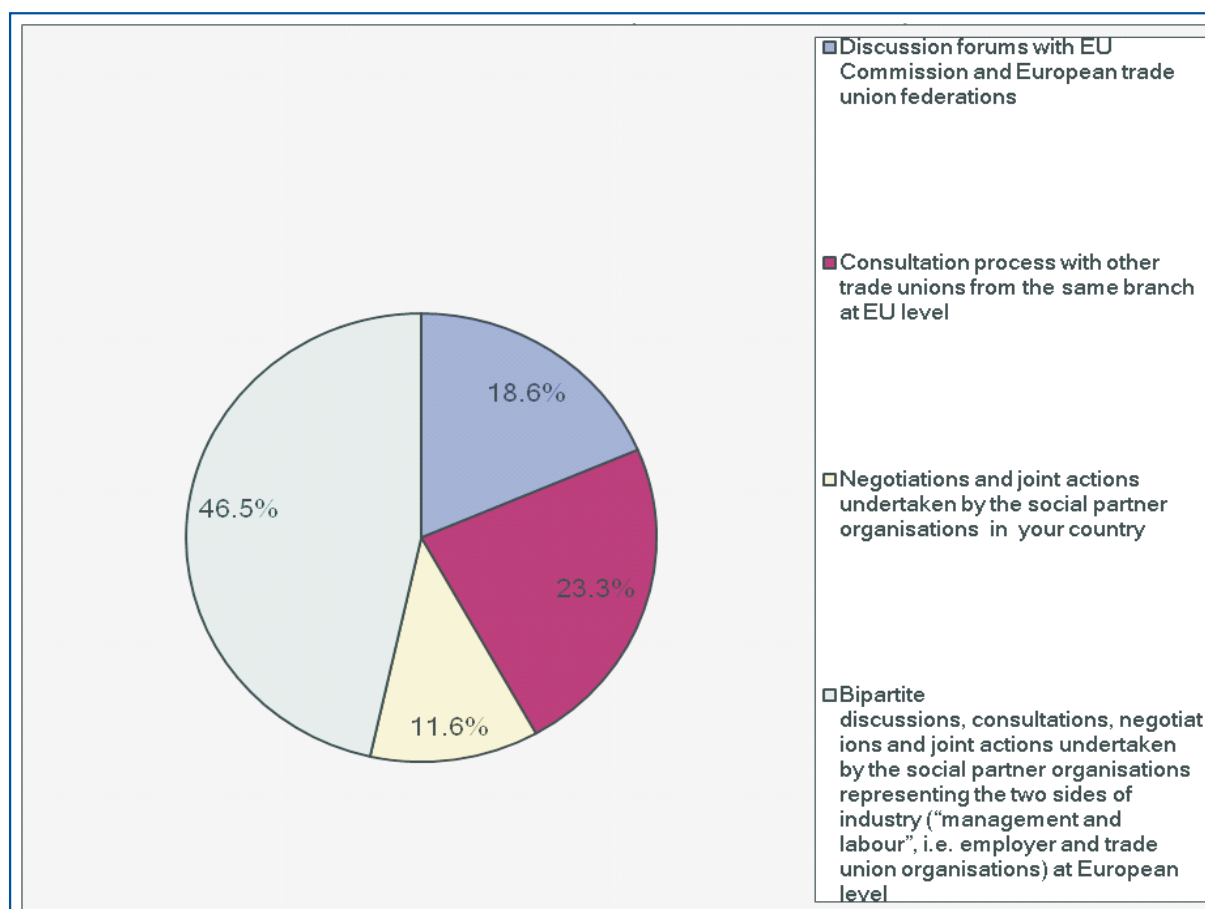


Chart D1: Perception of European social dialogue

Table B1: Understanding ESD

	Differences among tripartite social dialogue, bipartite cross-sectoral social dialogue and bipartite sectoral social dialogue in the EU	Differences among ESD guidelines, framework agreements and joint declarations	Do your members, in general, understand what ESD stands for?	How the ESD bodies work	Grasping the content of ESD work
General	Yes 58 %	Partly 56 %	Partly 81 %	Partly 58 %	Fully 54 %
Telecommunications	Yes 100 %	Fully 100 %	Partly 100 %	Fully 100 %	Fully 100 %
Chemistry	Yes 88%	Fully 63 %	Partly 88 %	Partly 63 %	50% Fully/Partly
Postal	No 100 %	Partly 100 %	Partly 100 %	Partly 100 %	Partly 100 %
Energy	Yes 100 %	Partly 100 %	Partly 70 %	Partly 90 %	Partly 80 %
Metal	Yes 64 %	Partly 55 %	Partly 73 %	Partly 64 %	Yes 55 %
Tourism	Yes 67 %	50 % Partly/Yes	Partly 67 %	Yes 67 %	Yes 100 %
Construction	Yes 60 %	Partly 80 %	Partly 100 %	Partly 80 %	Partly 80 %
Other	No 57 %	Partly 66 %	Partly 83 %	Partly 70 %	Partly 57 %

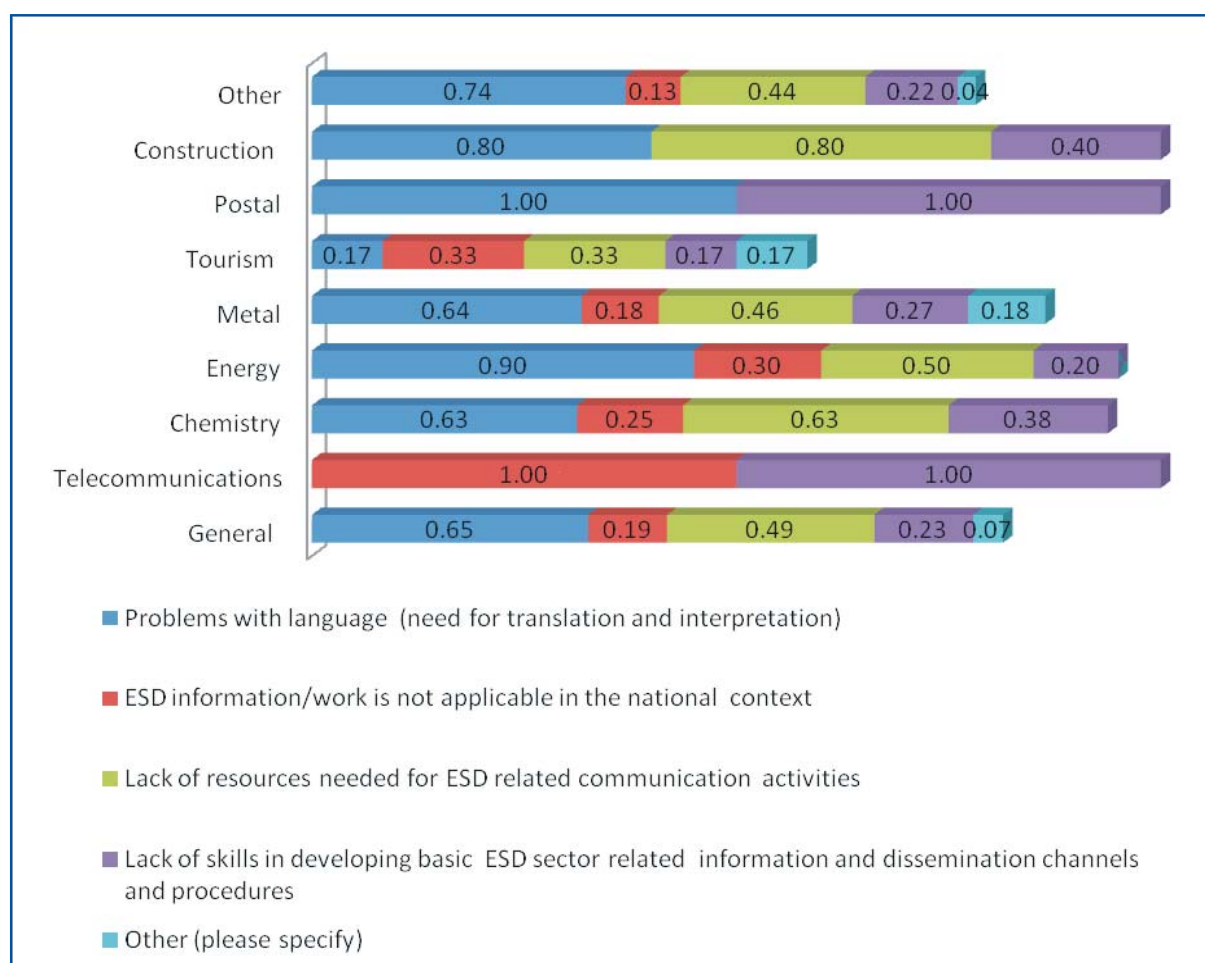
Chart E1: Limitations in dissemination of ESD-related information

Chart F1: Lack of capacity or experience in ESD

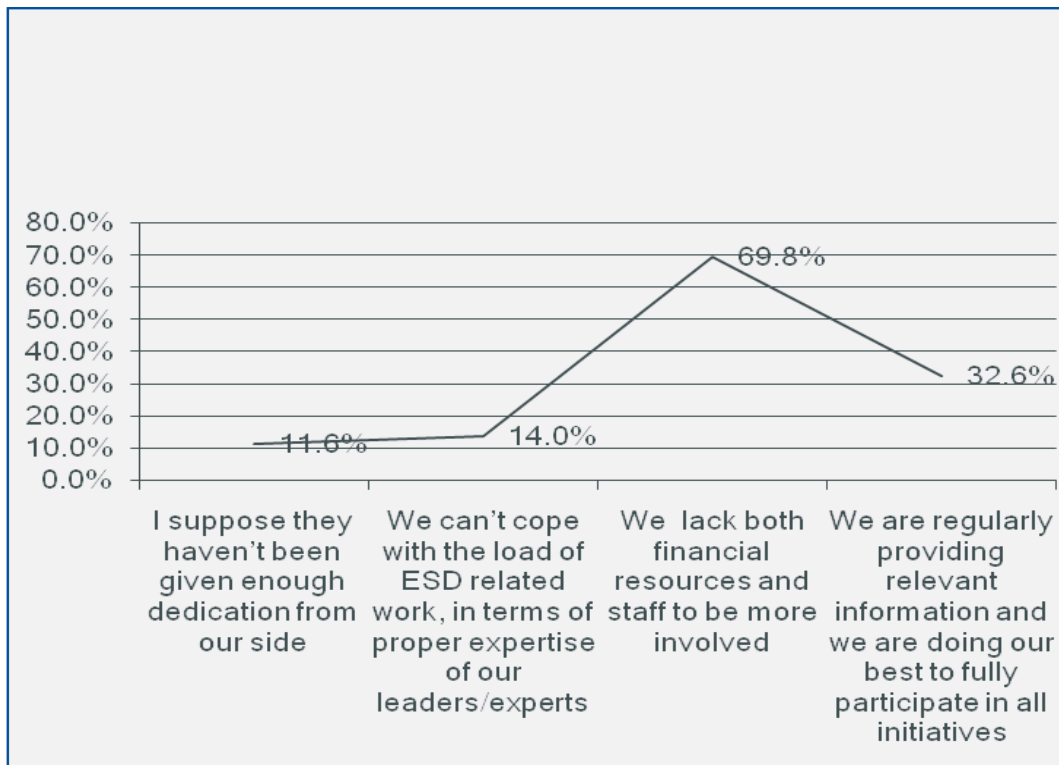


Chart G1: Unlocking the internal resources for ESD

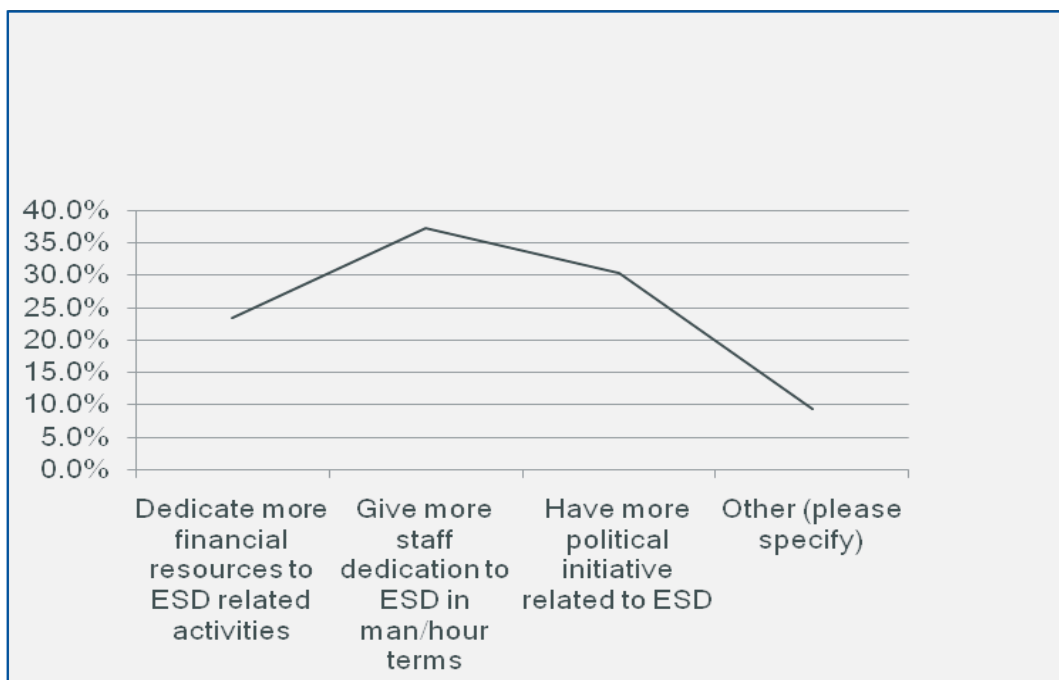
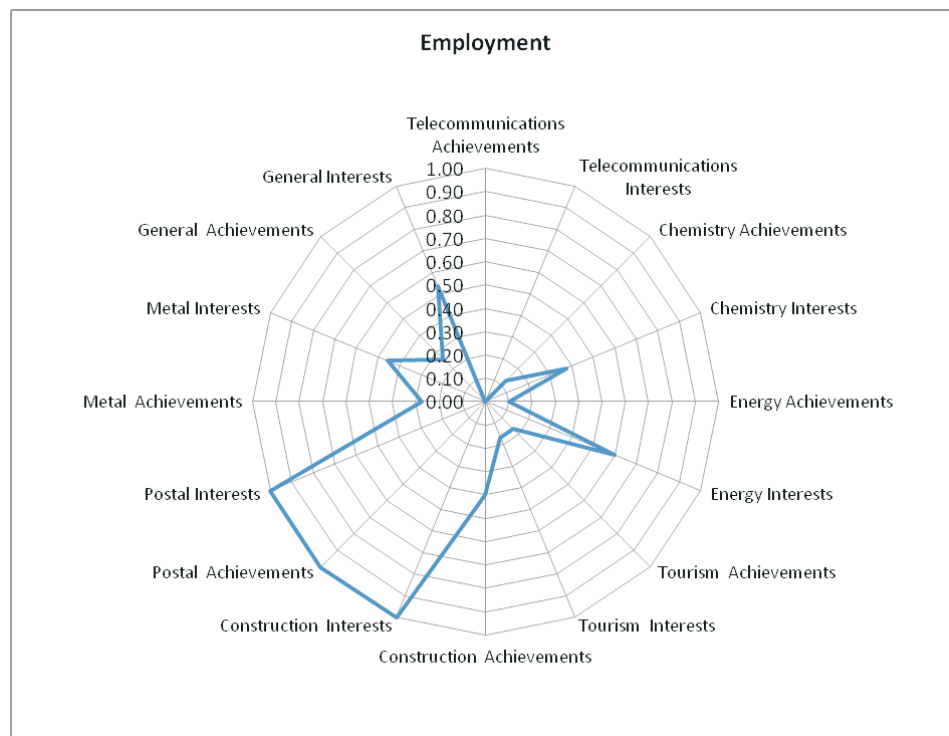
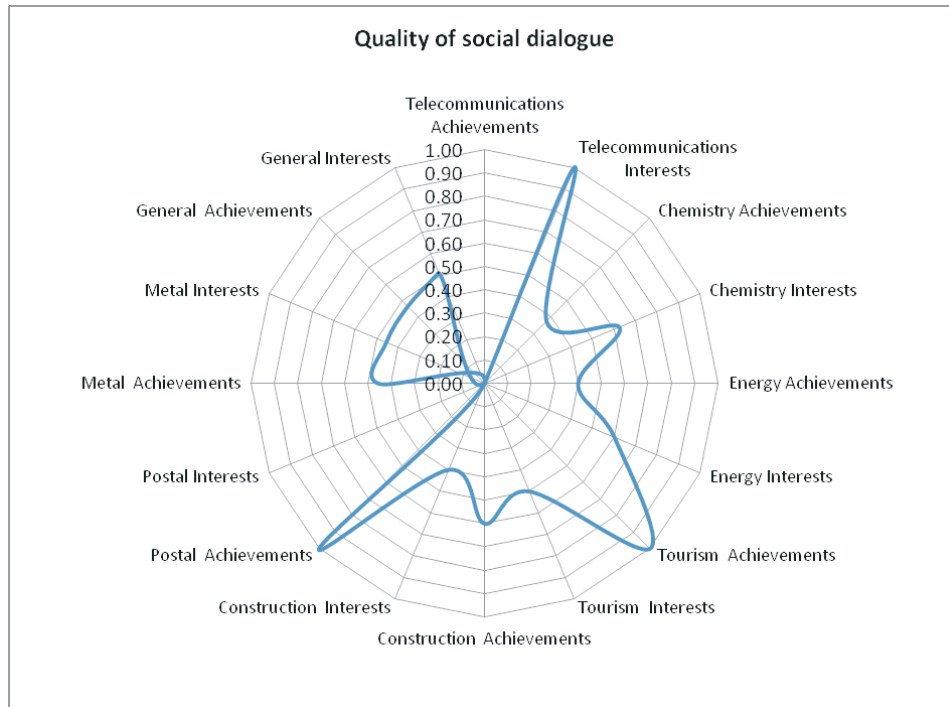


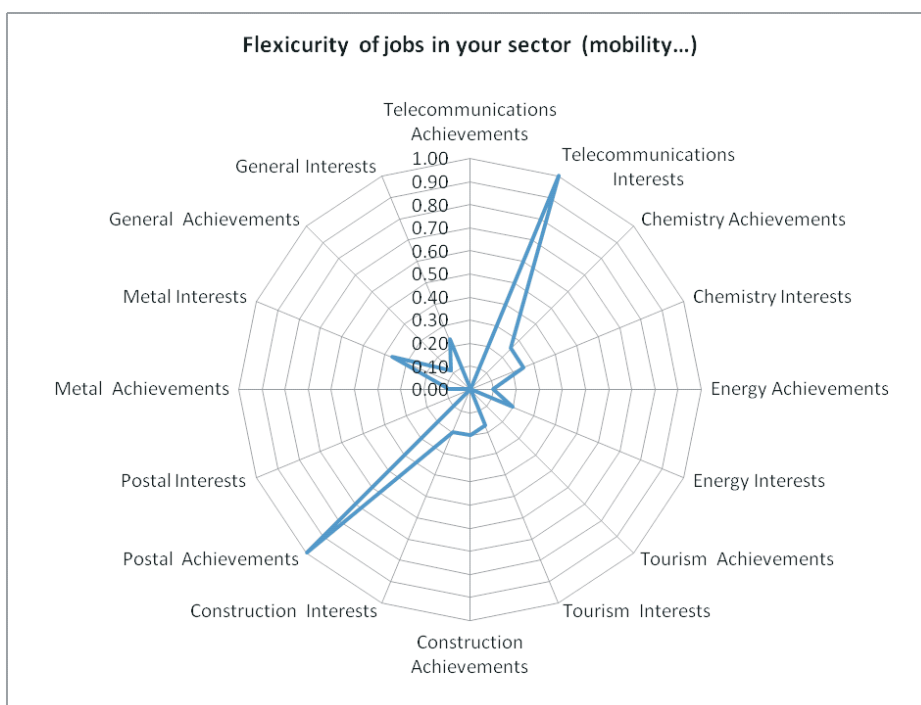
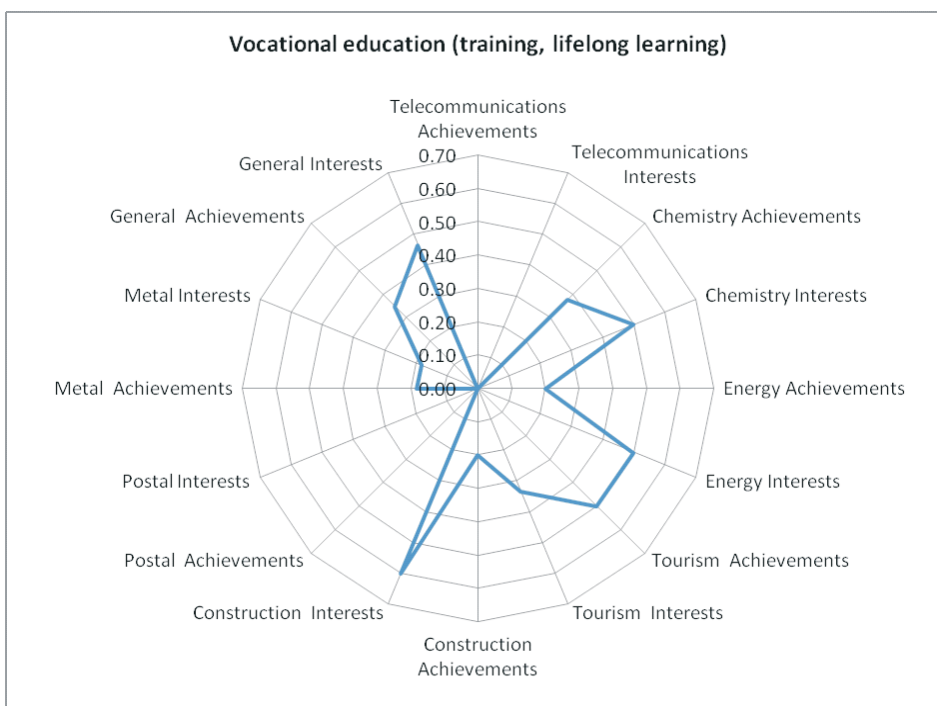
Table C1: ESD-related support from EU-level trade union federations

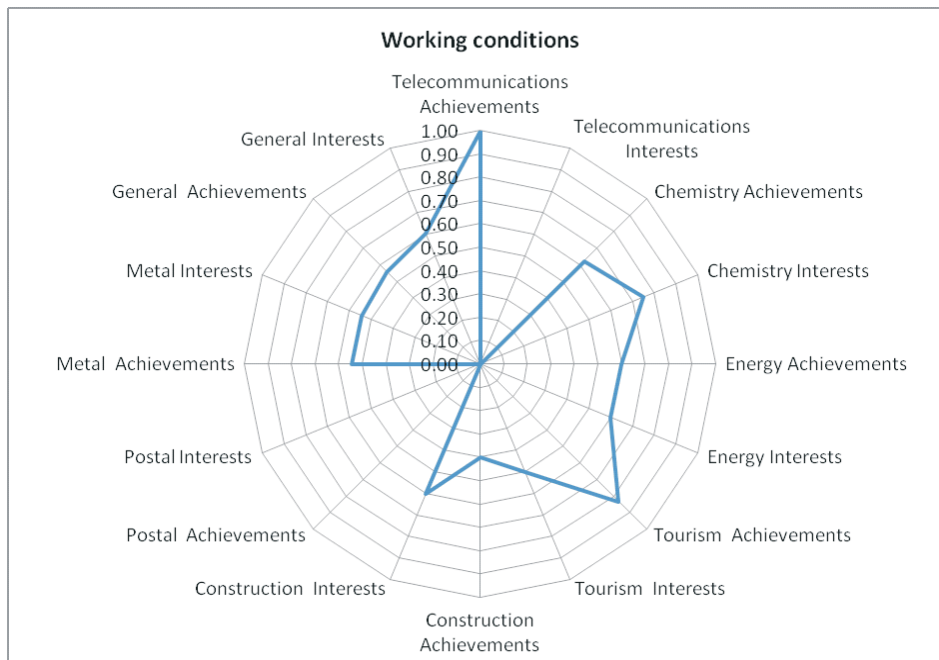
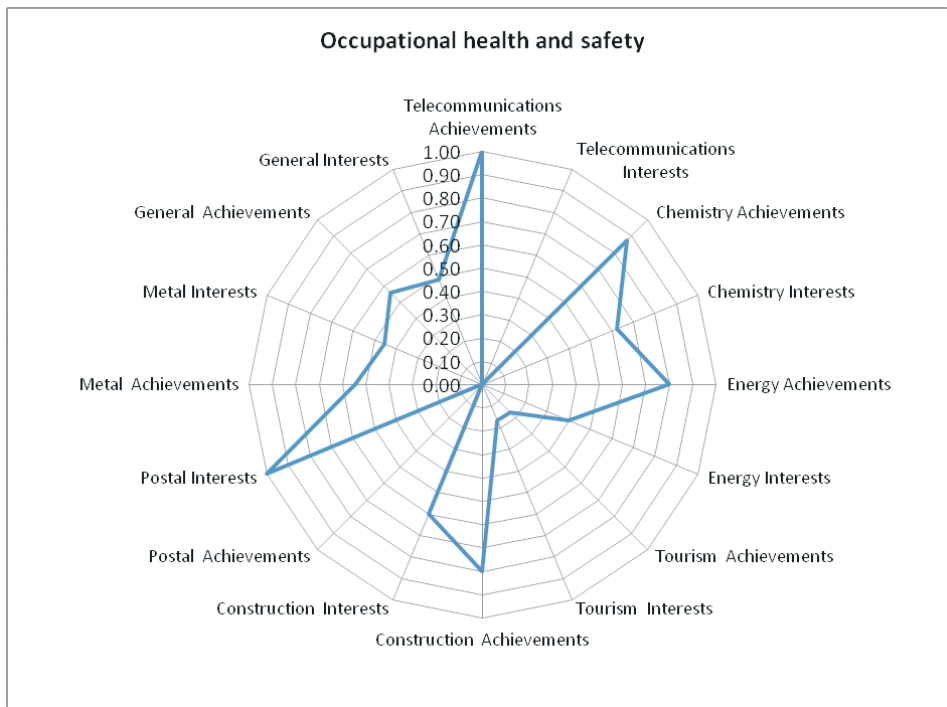
Elements of support	Satisfaction (Are you satisfied with the level of support that you are receiving on ESD from your European federation ?)	Involvement (having a representative on European sectoral social dialogue committees/ working groups)	Appropriateness (proper instruments for involvement)	Ownership
General	Partly 53 % /Yes 47 %	Yes 51 % / No 49 %	Yes 65 % /Not enough 23 %	Yes 42 %/39 % we should have been more active
Telecommunications	Partly 100 %	No 100 %	Yes 100 %	Should have been more active 100 %
Chemistry	Partly 63 %	Yes 50 %	Yes 75 %	Yes 50 %
Postal	Partly 100 %	Yes 100 %	Yes 100 %	Yes 100 %
Energy	Partly 60 %	No 70 %	No 50 %	Should have been more active 60 %
Metal	Partly 55 %	Yes 55 %	Yes 64 %	Should have been more active 46 %
Tourism	Yes 67 %	Yes 67 %	Yes 50 %	Yes 67 %
Construction	Partly 80 %	No 60 %	Not enough 60 %	Yes 60 %
Other	Partly 61 %	Yes 52 %	Yes 65 %	Yes 44 %

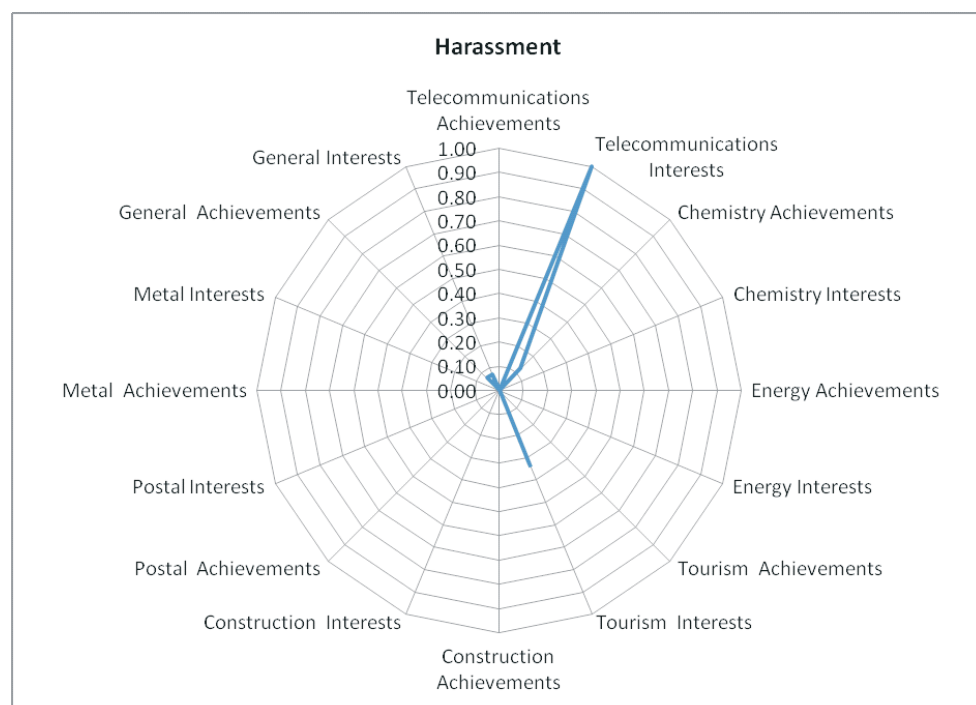
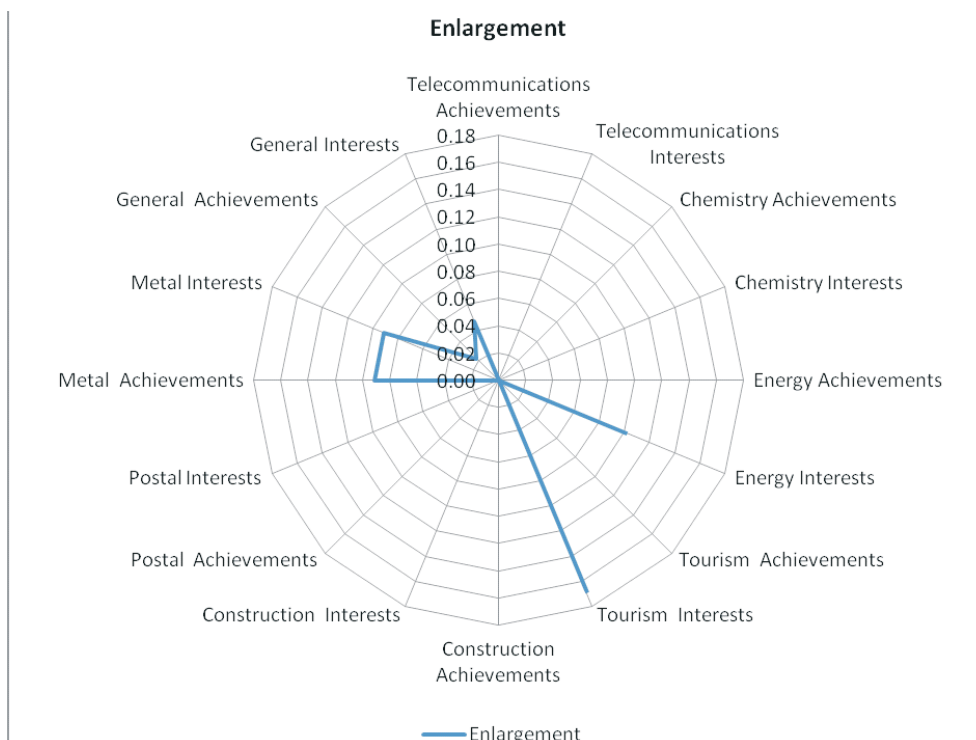
ANNEX B

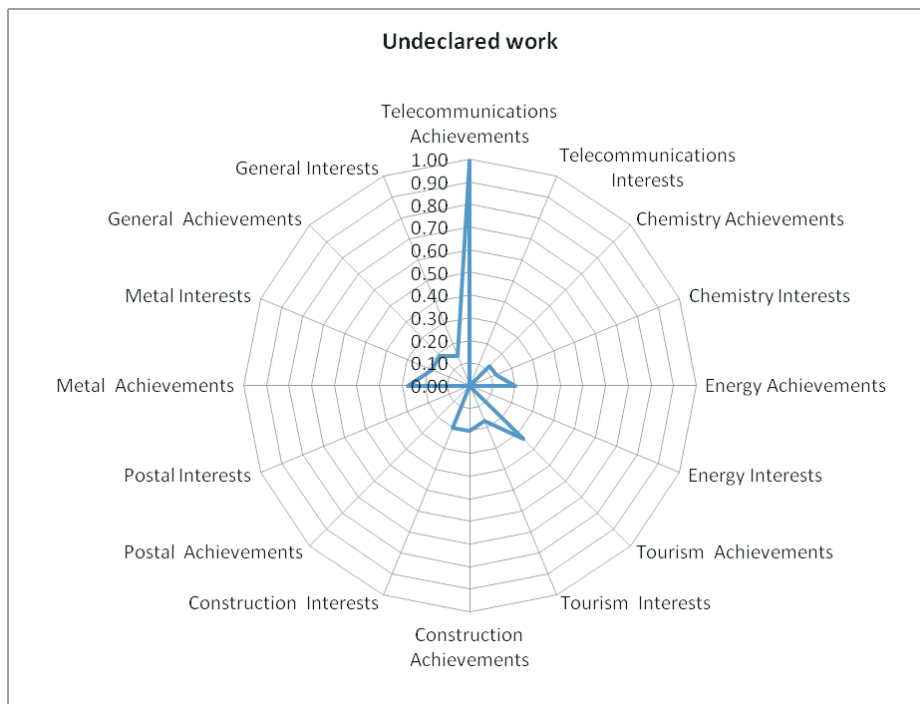
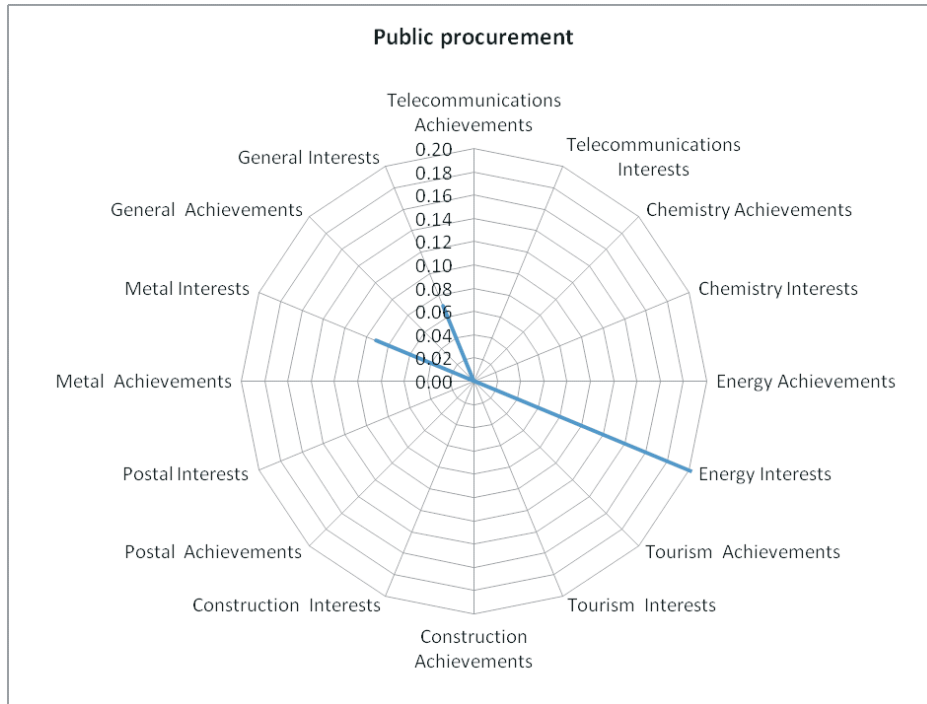
TOPICAL AREAS: IN-DEPTH INFORMATION BY SECTOR



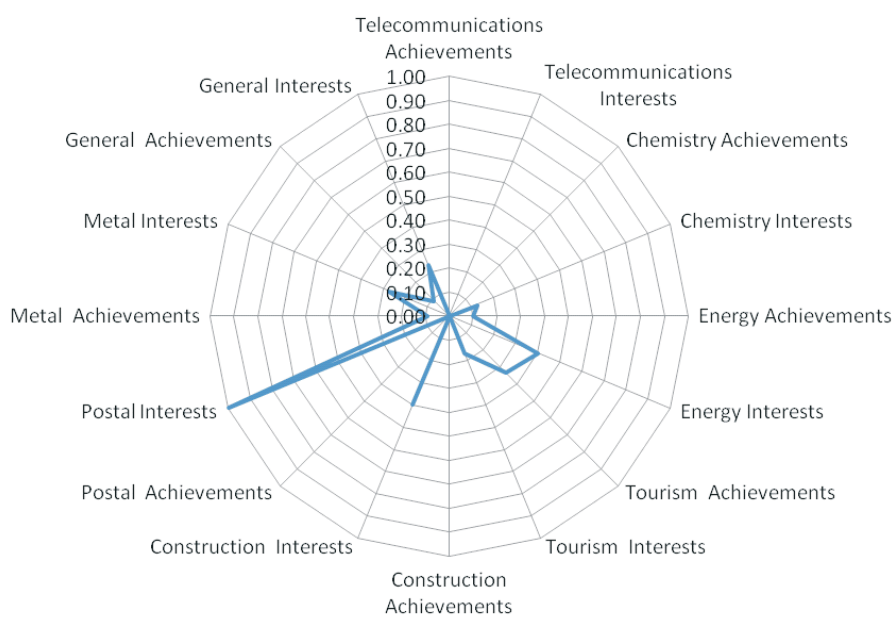




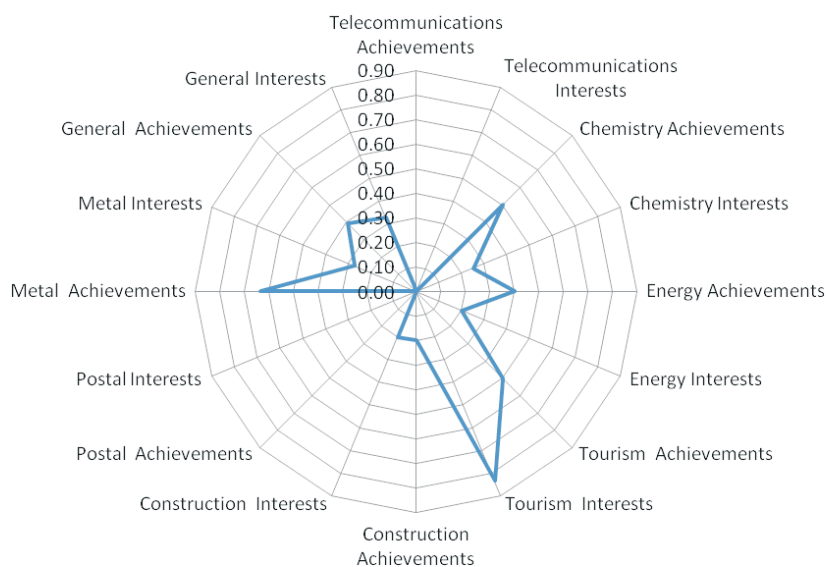


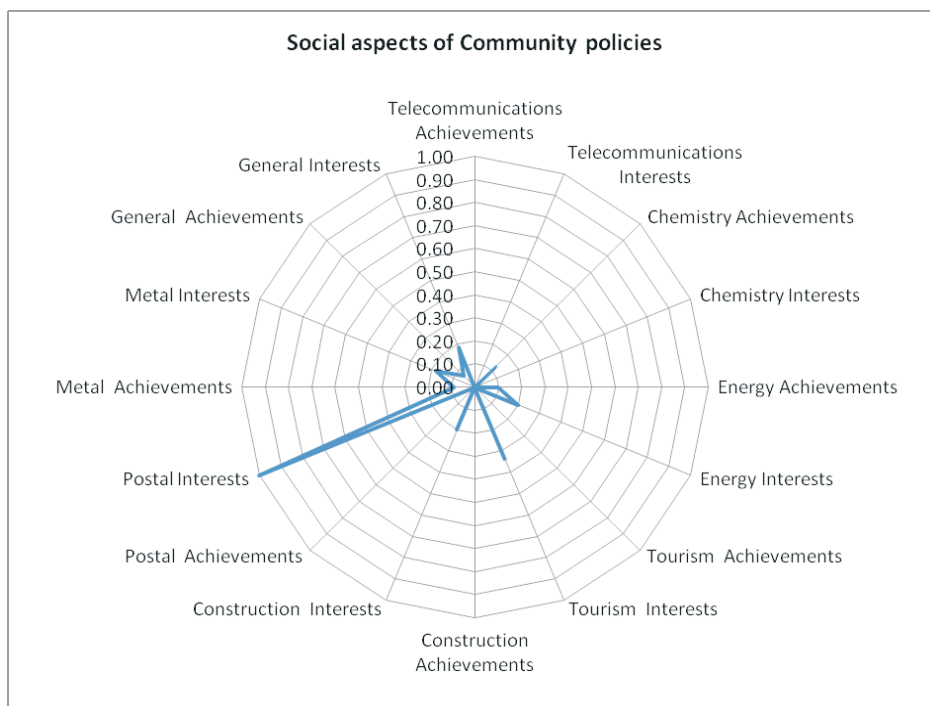
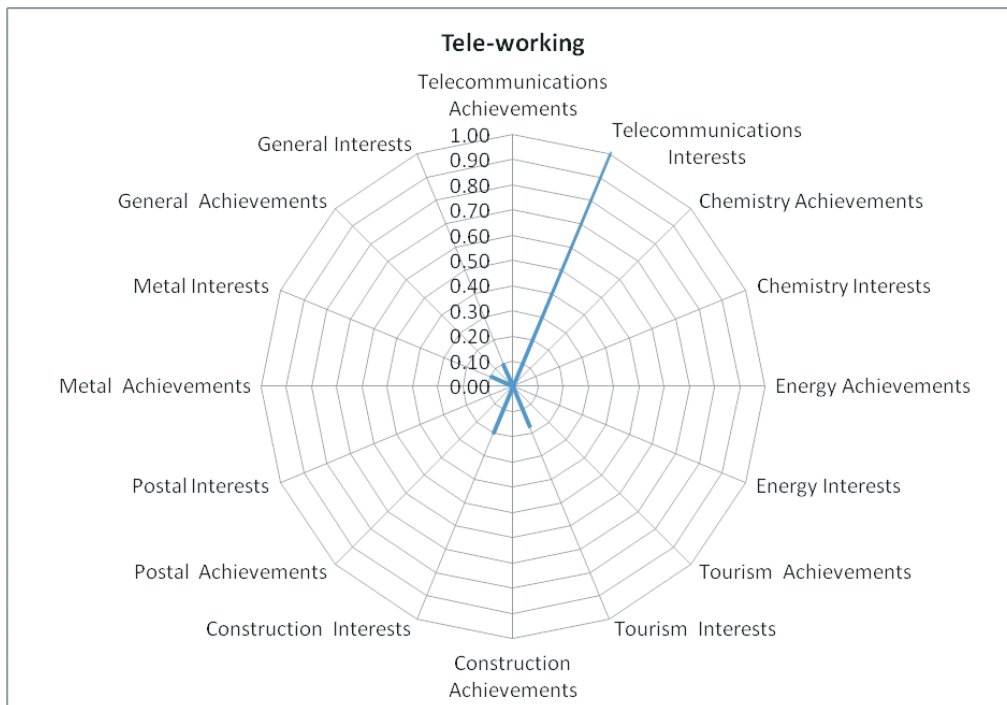


Sustainable development

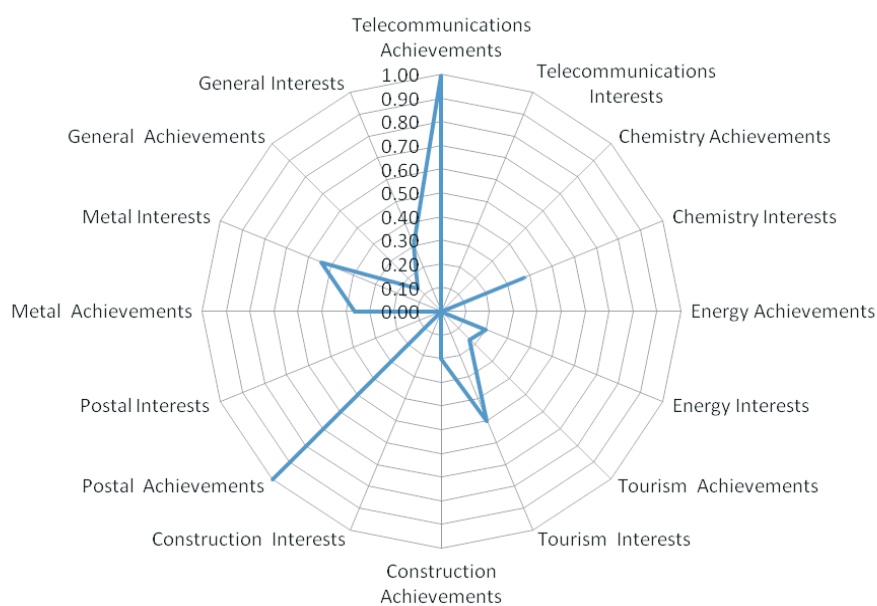


Working time





Corporate social responsibility



Economic and sector level industrial policies

