



# Capacity building for social dialogue at sectoral and company level

Poland

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## Introduction

In the modern system of social dialogue in Poland there is a clear dominance of a centralised form of social dialogue. It is evident both in a 'strict' statutory regulation regarding the rules of functioning of the Tripartite Commission for Socio-Economic Affairs (TC) and regional commission of social dialogue (RCSD) as well as in the government recommendations whose ambition is 'soft' coordination, providing the principles of social dialogue or formulating model rules of work for 'alternative' consultative committees such as tripartite sectoral teams (TST). The authors and advocates of centralised forms often justify their position by pointing to the unitary form of the state. On the one hand, it is supposed to justify the 'discrete' dominance of the government in TC, and on the other hand, establish a limit for the decentralisation of the dialogue conducted within RCSD and TST.

The Tripartite Sectoral Teams were established in response to the problems connected with the transformation of individual sectors of the Polish economy. However, very few of them became anything more than just platforms used by the state for securing social peace in exchange for the guarantee of various privileges for the strongest, intersectoral interest groups. Furthermore, the processes of restructuring and strategic privatisations of sectors were in progress and on the TST forum the government continued to be seen as a super-employer conceding or rejecting demands made of it. It is in fact no longer omnipotent, as was the case at the beginning of Polish changes at the turn of the 80s and 90s. On the other hand, the prevailing conviction is that the 'nominal' employer in the person of the owner cannot make any decision which would be against the will of the government.

Currently there are 11 TSTs and one sub-team:

- Tripartite Team for Energy Sector
- Tripartite Team for Social Conditions of Restructuring of Metallurgy
- Tripartite Team for Social Safety of Miners
- Tripartite Team for Social and Economic Conditions of Restructuring of Mining and Sulfur Processing
- Tripartite Team for Light Industry
- Tripartite Team for Social and Economic Conditions of Restructuring of Defense Potential Industry Establishments
- Tripartite Team for Chemical Sector
- Sub-Team for Pharmaceutical Industry of the Tripartite Team for Chemical Sector
- Tripartite Team for Shipping and Sea Fishery
- Tripartite Team for Railway
- Tripartite Team for Health Care
- Tripartite Team for Ship Building Industry

The next (12th) tripartite team will be established to strengthen the dialogue between employers and trade unions in the construction sector.

TSTs were developed gradually over the 90s in response to the pressure of the workers in individual sectors. They were appointed on the basis of the decisions of successive ministers of labour concluded after many months of negotiations by the government with the representatives of the society. At the turn of 2001 and 2002 work was being carried out on

transforming previous tripartite sector teams into problem teams of the Tripartite Commission for Socio-Economic Affairs. Ultimately, however, it was decided that the teams would continue to operate along with the Tripartite Commission, remaining the main forum for the country sector dialogue. In 2002, the operations of TST were put in order procedurally and organisationally by introducing uniform rules of work.

The possibility of initiating sectoral and local level dialogue also exists due to the regulations provided in Section XI of the Labour Code. They provide for a possibility of single-establishment and multi-establishment collective labour agreements. The latter agreements can be considered manifestation of dialogue at sectoral level.

By the end of 2005 there were in total 165 multi-establishment collective labour agreements registered in the ministry of labour. Currently they include:

- self governing employees of education who are not teachers or self governing communal economy employees,
- public employees employed in: water management units of the budgetary sphere, the National Board of National Parks, auxiliary units of prison system, military organisational units of the budgetary sphere,
- employees of: power industry, power generation auxiliary units, brown coal mining plants, automobile transportation, metallurgy, defence and aircraft industry plants, employed by employers associated in Association of Railway Employers, Telekomunikacja Polska S.A., Orbis S.A., State Forests National Forest Holding.

The foregoing shows that the multi-establishment collective labour agreements were concluded in those sectors in which: (1) there is a clearly visible presence of public power which is a direct employer or which holds the status of the 'founding body' – which is connected with corporate governance, (2) on appropriate Tripartite Sectoral Teams fora decisions were made regarding social protection during transformation processes. Pursuant to current legislation in Poland, however, there is no such category as a representative sectoral organisation – neither in reference to trade unions nor to organisations of employers. The relevant provision in this respect stipulates only the criteria of representativeness at the national level and it does so in reference to the privilege of constant participation of the strongest organisations of social partners in the works of the Tripartite Commission for Socio-Economic Affairs. Consequently one cannot talk about representative sectoral organisations of social partners in Poland.

As for the dialogue at local level, it takes place mainly when single-establishment collective labour agreements are concluded most of which concern the guaranteed level of pay and other benefits. Such agreements as the pact for employment concluded in Siemianowice Śląskie on the initiative of local self government authorities are, however, rare. As for the functioning of the councils of employees, due to the short period which elapsed from the adoption of the act implementing the directive on informing and consulting the employees, it is not possible to assess their operations in more detail.

During the implementation of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions project seven representative, in the meaning of the act on TC and RCSD from 2001, national centres of organisations of social partners were examined.

## Social dialogue at sectoral level

### Organisational, financial and skills capacities

The specificity of Polish industrial relations and specific immaturity of social dialogue at sectoral level is reflected in the structures of representative organisations of social partners. Both the four national organisations of employers and the three centres of trade unions have strongly developed federal organisational centres. Their main tasks include

strategic activities undertaken in the heavily politicised, centralised social dialogue in which there is a clear asymmetry for the benefit of the government.

In currently effective Polish legislation, however, there is no such category as representativeness on sectoral level. Both in reference to trade unions and to organisations of employers only the notion of national representative organisation in the meaning of the act on TC and RCSD is applied.

### **Employers' organisations**

According to the provisions of the act on the tripartite commission for socio-economic affairs and regional commissions of social dialogue four representative organisations of employers exist in Poland:

- Business Centre Club the Employers' Union (BCC EU),
- Confederation of Polish Employers (CPE),
- Polish Confederation of Private Employers 'Lewiatan' (PCPE),
- Polish Craft Association (PCA).

The organisational structure of BCC EU has a territorial character – it has 25 regional branches whose operations are coordinated by the chapter of chancellors. The regional branches not only correspond with the administrative division of the country (16 regions) but they also operate beyond the borders of Poland.

Most of about 3,000 entities affiliated to the Confederation of Polish Employers are associated in nine regional and 19 sectoral organisations of employers. Since February 2002 it has been possible for very important enterprises or extensive area of operations to be direct members. Thirty-four entities avail of this form of membership. The sectoral associations of employers grouped in CPE include the following:

- Federation of Employers of Light Industry,
- Federation of Polish Power Industry Employers Unions (national organisation),
- National Association of Motor Transportation Employers (national organisation),
- Polish Chamber of Chemical Industry - Union of Employers,
- Polish Organisation of Disabled Persons' Employers,
- Polish Association of Employers Aggregates Producers,
- Alliance of Brown Coal Producers – Union of Employers,
- Association of Employment Agencies,
- Polish Association of Ship Owners,
- Polish Association of Ship Owners and Marine Entrepreneurs,
- Association of Employers Metallurgy,
- Association of Employers of Power and Heat Plants,
- Association of Employers of Power Plants,

- Association of Employers Waste Management,
- Hard Coal Mining Association of Employers,
- Association of Employers of Foreign Trade,
- Association of Railway Employers,
- Association of Employers of Public Media,
- Association of Employers Power Generation Plants.

The structure of the Polish Craft Association has a dual character. Operating according to the act on craft from March 1989, the Union has been linking the chambers of craft and entrepreneurship which are non-territorial self-government entities, whereas, performing the tasks of the confederation of employers in the meaning of the act from May 1991 on organisations of employers, PCA links the entities which do not fall into the category of self-governing but association type entities. It also has its own sectoral structures which are associated around the sectoral Council of the Polish Craft Association:

- National Association of Plaster Companies,
- PCA National Sectoral Commission of Photographers,
- PCA Commission of Hairdressers and Beauticians,
- PCA Automotive Commission,
- PCA Commission of Goldsmiths and Jewelers,
- PCA Building Commission,
- PCA Commission of Energy Healers and Dowsers,
- Association of Polish Butchers and Cured Meat Producers,
- Association of Polish Millers,
- Polish Corporation of Sanitary, Heating, Gas and Air-Conditioning Technology,
- Association of Polish Carpenters,
- Association of Polish Bakers,
- Association of Polish Parquet Makers,
- Polish Association of Roofers,
- Association of Polish Photographers,
- Federation of Associations of Dowsers.

The basic self governing craft organisations are not, however, sectoral organisations but guilds and craft cooperatives. The guilds link craftsmen following the territorial criterion and the kind of business activity, and the most important tasks of craft cooperatives include organising the provision of services and manufacturing, assisting the members in performing their tasks and conducting their own economic as well as social and educational activities. The craft cooperatives are organisations of economic self government of craft guilds, craft cooperatives and craftsmen belonging

to no guild or cooperative. Apart from assistance in representing the interests of craftsmen the objective of the chambers is also to provide such instruction as consulting, promotion of professional ethics and conducting craft qualifications examinations. According to the 1982 Act, the organisations of economic self government of craft appointed the national representation through the Polish Craft Association. It can link chambers of craft and guilds operating in the whole country. The basic objective of PCA is to provide the organisations associated in it with assistance in carrying out statutory tasks, developing social and professional activities and representing the interests of craft. Furthermore, the Association serves the function of the audit body for craft cooperatives.

The Polish Confederation of Private Employers 'Lewiatan' groups together a total of 31 entities, including 11 from industry and 20 from services. Overall they link 976 enterprises, including 231 representing industry and 745 in services. In the opinion of its leaders PCPE since 2000 has recorded an increase of the number of enterprises linked in the sectoral structures of Lewiatan which are constantly developing and expanding their operations. It is also highly important that PCPE is formally connected in Tripartite Commission, and consequently in 16 regional consulting bodies through RCSD and in other institutions of social dialogue among others through employment councils. Participation in the work of those institutions was in a sense forced from Lewiatan by the development of a strong expert base. Access to the decision making processes and the expert base can be considered most important advantages of PCPE whose significance is recognised by the enterprises which decide to join the sectoral structures grouped in the Confederation.

PCPE 'Lewiatan' has sufficient organisational and financial resources to serve sectoral structures. The Lewiatan sectoral organisational offices employ 70 people; 34 employees work in organisations representing industry and 36 in organisations representing services, while 39 of these employees are men and 31 women.

The representatives of PCPE centres declare that the sectoral member organisations have at their disposal sufficient number of qualified staff to engage in collective bargaining as well as the necessary financial resources. Some differences in resources connected mainly with the size of individual sectoral organisations are also evident, however, the central organisation which make its appropriate resources available to the associated members can compensate for shortages.

In the opinion of the PCPE representatives, the sectoral organisations grouped in Lewiatan are likely to conclude multi-establishment collective labour agreements. It has to be remembered, however, that the multi-establishment collective labour agreements in Poland are still rare and – as mentioned earlier – they are concluded primarily in administratively controlled sectors. The PCPE representatives explain that the employers' sectoral organisations do not conclude collective labour agreements because as rule they include more favorable regulations than the provisions of the labour code, in which private employers are usually not interested. The multi-establishment collective labour agreements are not popular also due to the varied financial condition of the companies grouped in sectoral organisations. However, it is possible to conclude similar agreements and – as the leaders of Lewiatan declare – the sectoral entities associated in PCPE are well prepared both in organisational and financial terms. They make use of varied sources of financing – apart from membership fees they can draw from structural funds.

Potentially all sectoral members of Lewiatan, just like the remaining organisations of employers of this type in Poland, are authorised to negotiate the multi-establishment collective labour agreements. However, due to the reasons indicated earlier, they usually do not do that.

In 2005 none of the sectoral organisations affiliated to PCPE concluded any multi-establishment collective labour agreement, and the multi-establishment collective labour agreements which were concluded earlier apply in 20% of the enterprises in which Lewiatan's sectoral entities operate.

The leaders of Lewiatan assess the course of collective bargaining at multi-establishment level as rather unsatisfactory. The main reason for that is the social strategy of 'digging in their positions' allegedly assumed by social partners. In the opinion of the PCPE representatives the results of collective bargaining are not grounds for making further efforts in any of the sectors. As for the future role of multi-establishment collective labour agreements, they claim that it will not change, which means that they will be concluded in the major public enterprises in which trade unions operate.

### Trade unions

In Poland, according to the act on TC and RCSD there are three national organisations of trade unions:

- Trade Unions Forum (TUF),
- All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions (APATU),
- Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union 'Solidarność' (ISGTU 'Solidarność').

TUF and APATU are sectoral federations, whereas the organisation of ISGTU 'Solidarność' is primarily territorial and constitutes a part of historical tradition of the union. Apart from the territorial structures there are in fact sectoral secretariats; however, they are only auxiliary links. The secretariats cover the following sectors:

- light industry,
- mining and power generation,
- metal workers,
- food industry,
- science and education,
- agriculture,
- building and wood industry,
- chemical industry,
- communication,
- transport workers,
- public services,
- culture and media,
- banks, trade and insurance,
- natural resources and environmental protection,
- health care,
- pensioners.

The leaders of ISGTU centre in Gdańsk emphasise the significant commitment of sectoral structures to dialogue at regional level. However, they were not willing to provide specific answers to questions answered. Taking into account, however, the declining role of trade unions in Poland it should be said that the organisations affiliated in ISGTU, just

like the unions associated in the remaining two centres, play a marginal role in the dialogue at multi-establishment level. 'Solidarność' is represented in all the previously mentioned Tripartite Sectoral Teams.

Despite the differences in the internal structure, this can also refer to APATU. The leaders of this organisation were not willing to answer the questions provided in the questionnaire either. This centre groups sectoral unions in 13 structures:

- raw materials and power industry,
- manufacturing industry,
- education, science and culture,
- health care and social insurance,
- agriculture and food management,
- building, roads, forestry, wood industry, environmental protection and water management,
- communal management,
- cooperatives,
- trade and services,
- transport and marine economy,
- railway,
- communication.

The Trade Union Forum (TUF) links 49 sectoral unions. Ten of them represent industry, 20 services and 19 public sector (entities whose founding body is the state or self government body). In total the Forum associates 500,000 employees: 90,000 in the unions representing industry, 110,000 services and 300,000 in the public sector unions. According to the representatives of the TUF centre, the number of members associated in sectoral organisations has been growing all the time since the centre was established in 2001.

The offices of the TUF member sectoral organisations employ in total over 500 people. Many of them work on the basis of the contracts for specific tasks and mandatory contracts. The leaders of the Forum do not, however, have any more precise data in this respect. Sixty per cent of the employees are men and 40% women. The existing human resources, both in terms of numbers and qualifications, meet the needs of sectoral organisations. Furthermore, the Forum representatives indicate that most member organisations in TUF have been engaging in social dialogue for over 10 years. During that time many unionists have been educated and trained in the area of conducting negotiations; however, a serious shortage of financial resources makes it difficult both for the centre and sectoral organisations to provide assistance to the associated members. The situation is a little better in the organisations representing industrial sectors. The most dramatic shortage of financial resources is evident in health care.

The possibilities of sectoral organisations in the area of concluding multi-establishment collective labour agreements are considered average. In the opinion of TUF leaders, this less than desirable situation is affected by the conditions of public sector. On the other hand, the representatives of the centre of the Forum admit that the organisational possibilities of sectoral unions are generally good. This assessment is different for services where the possibilities are considered average and for public sector where they are considered poor.



The main source of financing the sectoral unions associated in TUF is membership fees. Other resources are insignificant in this respect.

According to the TUF leaders not all sectoral organisations can formally negotiate collective labour agreements. There are, however, no precise data in this respect. The representatives of the Forum have no information about the number of collective labour agreements concluded by the member sectoral organisations since 2005. In general, however, they assess the collective bargaining at single establishment level as unsatisfactory. In their opinion, the employers have little interest in concluding such agreements. Apart from some cases, it is difficult to establish who should represent them – the government or direct (or ‘immediate’) employers. This kind of problem affects the partly privatised sectors where the State Treasury maintains part of formal corporate governance. Besides it is the case that the collective agreements concluded are not respected by the employers.

So far the experiences in collective bargaining in industry have proved most promising. At the same time the TUF representatives are not expecting any changes in the area of negotiating multi-establishment labour agreement in the foreseeable future.

### **Social dialogue at company level**

According to data from the Central Statistical Office for Poland, the landscape of Polish enterprises is dominated by privately-owned entities. In terms of the number of employees, micro-enterprises and SMEs dominate the private as well as the public sector. However, the largest enterprises in terms of employment are to be found in the public sector. Private enterprises occupy themselves chiefly with industrial processing, commerce and services. Public entities, meanwhile, are more involved in education, healthcare and, to a lesser extent, transport.

Data from the early 2000s indicates that enterprises in which union organisations are present account for only a small minority of SMEs. Unions are to be found in 5% of all companies employing up to 19 workers, 7% of companies employing between 20 and 49 workers, and 22% of companies employing between 50 and 250 workers. Past data point to a tendency for a shrinking presence of trade unions in enterprises of this category. Business owners are not necessarily welcoming with respect to unions. The rule of thumb is that an enterprise with some type of union structure is likely to have a collective agreement or remuneration rules. No collective agreements occur in micro-enterprises, and they are rare in SMEs.

As already mentioned, in Poland social dialogue at local level – where it exists – is developing primarily through single-establishment collective labour agreements whose conclusion – just like in the case of multi-establishment collective labour agreements – is provided in Section XI of the Labour Code. For some time now there have been in effect also the provisions of the act on works councils which implements the directive of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe no. 2002/14 regarding informing and consulting employees. The works councils will be established in enterprises which employ over 50 employees. Until March 2008 they will be established in companies employing 50 to 100 employees. A year earlier they shall be established in enterprises which employ more than 100 employees. The councils will be composed of three to seven members and their term of office shall last four years. Over that period its members will be protected in a similar way as trade union representatives. The employers shall submit the information regarding the operations and the economic situation of the companies as well as expected changes in employment and organisation of work to the councils for verification. Undoubtedly the works councils constitute new form of social dialogue in the workplace. At the present stage of their development it is, however, difficult to evaluate their impact. It is possible, however, to formulate a hypothesis that the councils will perform their role in those enterprises in which trade unions exist. They will be then less vulnerable to the direct influence of the employers which should facilitate full consultation.

The large-scale private production sector is broadly divided into two categories: unionised and non-unionised. In social dialogue terms, the latter firms do not depart significantly from what can be seen in the SME sector. An important role in shaping industrial relations is played by the managerial staff who administer the enterprise on behalf of the owner (or, more usually, of a group of owners). Again, the management of such firms is reportedly generally ill-disposed towards any unions. That said, the absence of employee representation is not as evident as it is in the SME sector, and remuneration and employment terms are relatively adequate. By the same token, labour law violations are rare.

### **Organisational, financial and skills capacities**

The information about the dialogue at local level which the representative organisations of social partners wanted to share proved even more scant than in the case of sectoral level. More specific answers were provided only by the representatives of PCPE 'Lewiatan' and TUF (see attached questionnaires).

### **Employers' organisations**

On the basis of the information gathered in the organisation of PCPE, trade unions exist only in 10-19 % of associated enterprises. Written contracts of employment markedly prevail in those entities.

In companies that belong to Lewiatan employing over 250 employees there are 33 single-establishment collective labour agreements in place, in companies employing between 50 and 249 there are four agreements and in entities with fewer than 50 employees seven agreements.

In the opinion of the PCPE activists, negotiations at company level almost always involve sectoral organisations of employers. Experts from sectoral organisations together with experts from PCPE participate in the negotiations. The leaders of Lewiatan are convinced that over the next three years collective bargaining will become more popular. They are also optimistic that reducing tax burdens connected with creating workplaces and simplifying labour law will encourage their establishment.

The representatives of PCPE say that works councils will become more and more popular arising from legislation in May 2006 of the act implementing the Directive on informing and consulting employees. At the same time they consider the implementation of this regulation very difficult. However, this significantly contributes to the spread of social dialogue in the workplace.

In relation to the most common workplace conflicts, the PCPE leaders indicate conflicts regarding salaries (1) and working time (2). At the same time they admit that currently associated enterprises do not have effective mechanisms for resolving conflicts. In order to remedy this situation, Lewiatan is moving in the Tripartite Commission to appoint an arbitration court whose task would be resolution of disputes in the area of individual relations at work.

### **Trade unions**

With reference to social dialogue at local level, the TUF representatives declared that based on their information several company union organisations often coexist at the level of individual enterprises. No answer, however, was given to the percentage of the companies in which shop stewards operate.

The conditions for establishing company union organisations in Poland are regulated by the 1991 act on trade unions. The key condition to be met prior to establishing a union organisation is the adoption of a resolution to that end by at least 10 persons authorised to establish a trade union. Those persons adopt the statutes of the union and appoint its founding committee composed of three to seven persons. A trade union established in this manner must be registered within 30 days of its establishment in the National Court Register.

In the opinion of the Forum activists, in the enterprises in which trade unions associated in TUF operate written agreements prevail. In 90% of companies employing over 250 employees there are single-establishment collective labour agreements. They are in place also in 50% of enterprises employing between 50 and 249 employees. In the opinion of the TUF leaders, sectoral organisations belonging to the Forum usually get involved in negotiations at company level. In the unionists' opinion, over the next three years the negotiations will remain at the same level. Furthermore, they also expect that works councils, which will be established in accordance with the Directive on informing and consulting employees will become more popular over next three years. They also admit that the councils will significantly contribute to the increase of access to information and consultation at local level.

With reference to the most common workplace conflicts, the unionists indicated conflicts regarding: working time (1), dismissals (1), salaries (2) and working conditions (2). They did not, however, answer the question about the operations of the mechanisms of resolving workplace conflicts.

## Future development

### Employers' organisations

Referring to the future organisational possibilities in sectoral level dialogue, the PCPE representatives indicate that the applicable rules of sectoral dialogue developed at the beginning of the transformation in Poland. The dramatic acceleration of globalisation processes and intensification of the competing interests of the key social partners mean that the role of sectoral dialogue is not so important at present. In their opinion their greater participation in the process of developing new rules of social dialogue is very important for the growth of employers' organisations.

The representatives of Lewiatan see the opportunity for the growth of dialogue at local level in a possible increase of participation by the representatives of enterprises in the work of the Confederation sectoral structures. They also point out that the development of the negotiating staff should be accomplished by continuous improvement of their competences and qualifications. This can be achieved by training and participating in different type of conferences explaining the experiences of the countries where collective labour agreements and other forms of dialogue at sectoral and local level play a much greater role than in Poland.

They see the possibilities for improving the financial situation of the organisations involved in sectoral level dialogue by a greater use of structural funds. However, they have no opinion about increased funding of dialogue at local level.

### Trade unions

Unfortunately the representatives of trade unions did not formulate opinions about the future of the dialogue at sector and local level.

## Conclusion

The central barriers to the future development of sectoral and local level social dialogue are not organisational, skills or financial capacities of the social partners' organisations but so called political need at central level. Polish social dialogue is still highly centralised and politicised. At the current stage of the development of social dialogue in Poland there is a clear dominance of centralised forms of consultation with the participation of government representatives. Single-establishment and multi-establishment collective labour agreements are potential tools for its decentralisation. However, neither of them is sufficiently popular. On the other hand, a means of extending multi-establishment collective agreements is needed. The future development of sectoral teams from centralised and tripartite institutions to bipartite and autonomic platforms of collective agreements would also improve the possibility of decentralisation. The positive

role in the ‘sectoralisation’ of social dialogue in Poland could potentially advance the current debate about a possible new social pact in Poland.

At local level some hope for the development of dialogue can be expected from the growth of the facilitation on the local level and the works councils arising from the statutory implementation of the Directive on information and consultation.

**Jacek Sroka**, University of Wroclaw

## Annex

### Outcome of the workshop

Main strengths and weaknesses of the social dialogue capacity building on sectoral and local level

Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>Sectoral</b>	
Possible development of social dialogue at territorial (regional) level	Strong political swing at the regional level in territorial administration system
Good practices in some sectors (e.g. brewery) in connection with European Works Councils	Strong position of the 11 politicised central Tripartite Teams, which are operating similar to the ‘iron rings’ analysed by Mancur Olson
Rising the awareness of the role of dialogue at sectoral level	Declining unionisation of the labour force and the weakness of employers’ organisations
<b>Local</b>	
Examples of good cooperation between trade unions and employers at the company level, negotiations on wages growth and optimisation of employment	Cooperation developed mainly in large, public controlled companies
Examples of good practice of contracting by trade unions and investors (during privatisation) social packages (guarantees for employment, compensation for reducing employment, salary growth, etc.)	Lack of similar contracts in small and medium enterprises which are the main part of the economy
Development of the mediation, arbitration and conciliation tools, according to Polish law	A lack of organisational culture is a barrier to making proper use of the existing mediation, arbitration and conciliation tools; support of the state is needed
Growing awareness of the role of dialogue on local level	Absence of the employee’s representation in the majority of Polish plants, reluctant employers

### Development projects

Nowadays in Poland the ‘climate’ for the development projects of social dialogue at sectoral and local level does not exist. Discussion is focused on a possible new social pact at national level. Nevertheless, at the beginning of 2007, it was still unclear which elements are crucial for the future pact. Some experts (e.g. Michal Boni in his comment on the presented Polish report) claim that if we are considering the conditions for development of multi-establishment collective labour agreements, we should take into account that in some sectors (particularly newly developed sectors of the economy) there is no need for cooperation between trade unions, if they exist, and there is need for cooperation between employers, mainly because of strong competition. For M. Boni, the model of Polish industrial relations at the

sectoral level seems to be underdeveloped not because of specific immaturity of social dialogue, but rather because of the natural evolution of the flexible model, without pressure on the common labour agreement. The 'mature' Polish model of industrial relations may be closer to a mix of British pluralist and French statist models than to continental corporatism.

**List of participants**

*Social dialogue capacity building at sectoral and company level in Cyprus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia*

27-28 June 2006

Sofia

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