

SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND THE ROLE OF THE ILO

Since the creation of the ILO in 1919, social dialogue has been one of the founding principles.

Some international labour standards are specifically important for social dialogue to the extent that they define its principal elements and conditions, namely Convention No. 87 in 1948 on Freedom of Association and the Protection of the Right to Organise; Convention No. 98 in 1949 on the Right to Organise and to Collective Bargaining; Convention No. 151 in 1978 on Labour Relations in Public Service; Convention No. 154 in 1981 on Collective Bargaining, as well as Convention No. 135 in 1971 on Workers' Representatives. According to the Declaration of the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, adopted by the ILO in 1998, 'all ILO Members have an obligation, arising from the very fact of membership of the ILO', to respect, promote and realise the principles of the freedom of the Trade Union and recognise the right to collective bargaining, enshrined in the first two Conventions above, even if they have not been ratified.

These norms also underline the fact that social partners should not be subject to interference from each other or from the government in their functions and activities, and should be able to develop their programmes and carry out their activities in complete freedom, including representing the interests of their Members through collective bargaining, in free and voluntary negotiations.

Source: International Labour Conference, 102nd Session, 2013



TCFL Textiles, Clothing, Footwear and Leather



**CONCLUSIONS ON THE EVOLUTION,
CONTENT, STRONG POINTS AND WEAK
POINTS OF THE SOCIAL DIALOGUE**

Partnership



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European Commission -
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EUROPEAN SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Many good labour practices were achieved through social dialogue. These include daily working hours, maternity protection and a whole set of policies aimed at promoting safety in the workplace and harmony in labour relations. The main aim of social dialogue is to promote consensus and democratic participation of stakeholders in the world of work: representatives of governments, employers and trade unions. Social dialogue is fundamental to achieve social justice.

At the same time, it is a means to achieve socio-economic objectives. It is also an objective in itself since it gives people a voice and a role in their respective companies and places of work. It may be bipartite, between workers and employers (referred to as 'social partners') or tripartite which includes the government.

European social dialogue has produced good outcomes, namely: the Framework Agreement on Violence and Harassment in the Workplace, adopted in April 2007, as well as combating pay inequality between men and women and promoting work and family life balance, among others.

In April 2017, the European Commission published the European Pillar of Social Rights in which it recognises, among other aspects, the right of social partners to participate in drafting and implementing social and labour policies, the development of which is protected in politics and in the legislative process, at the same time, taking into account the diversity of national systems.

For the European Parliament, social dialogue is fundamental in order to achieve employment objectives as defined in Strategy Europe 2020.

Source: Factsheets on the European Union - 2017

THE PROJECT

“To reinforce Social Dialogue and sectoral corporate Collective Bargaining for continued improvement in employment and productivity in the Textile, Clothing, Leather and Footwear industries”

FESETE, the Portuguese federation of trade unions representing the Textile, Clothing, Leather and Footwear sectors in Portugal, in partnership with ACV-CSC METEA, the Belgian trade union organisation representing the Textile and Clothing sectors, OS-TOK, the Czech trade union representing the Textile, Clothing and Leather sectors and DISK TEKSTIL, the Turkish trade union organisation representing the Textile, Clothing, Leather and Footwear developed this project to promote on-going improvement in employment and productivity in Textile, Clothing, Leather and Footwear industries. The objective of this project is to promote participation of sectoral partners in these industries in Social Dialogue in order to transform sectoral and corporate collective bargaining into an instrument guaranteeing the viability of companies and the protection of employment in a changing global and national environment.

Within the participating organisations of this partnership, in workshops aimed at union leaders who were asked to give their opinions, the project was aimed at identifying:

- **Strengths**
- **Weaknesses**
- **Opportunities**
- **Threats**

that could influence the future development of these sectors in the coming years in their countries.

Textiles, Clothing, Leather and Footwear are highly developed sectors with a strong tradition in Europe. They continue to perform a vital role within the socio-economic system of the European Union.

However, it is necessary to strengthen social dialogue and to promote policies guaranteeing fair competition between companies, improvement of working conditions and fairer employment relations, conditions that are necessary to attract qualified young people.

SWOT ANALYSIS

		INTERNAL FACTORS	
		STRENGTHS (+)	WEAKNESSES (-)
TCL INDUSTRIES		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of good quality production in textiles, clothing, leather and footwear • Tradition and Know-how of workers • Flexibility and adaptability in production (companies producing with quality and speed) • Production of knowledge in Technical colleges and universities, and their proximity to the other stakeholders in the sector, namely in the development of Technical Textiles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence or weak presence of professional schools • Loss of attractiveness because of low salaries • Difficulty in finding young people and qualified workers • Relocation of more qualified workers for training workers in countries where the company is setting up production areas • Unfair competition through the absence of social standards in the World Trade Organisation (WTO)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accumulated experience of social partners in the social dialogue • Diversity of instruments of collective labour regulation • Lack of cover of rights and earnings via collective bargaining in Turkey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The economic - financial crisis has led to the reduction in collective bargaining, jeopardising employment and socio-economic cohesion. • Lack of human and financial resources of social partners, specifically of trade unions.

		EXTERNAL FACTORS	
		OPPORTUNITIES (+)	THREATS
TCL INDUSTRIES		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical and functional textiles are increasing with possible application in various fields such as health, the automobile industry, construction and aeronautics. • Diversity of solutions for the end-client • Innovation in equipment and new technologies, as well as materials, used in production • Incorporation of technology in the clothing industry • Non-technological innovation, such as design, brand and fashion • Quality and added-value of the product • More research and co-operation between technical colleges, universities and companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in conditions in the global market, namely those introduced by the World Trade Organisation • Shortage of qualified young people to work in these sectors • Unfair competition between companies, namely when compared with those of emergent markets, penalising employment and socio-economic cohesion • Financial groups who buy multinational companies, break them up and sell off parts of the companies for profit.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening of international relations and good practice at European level • Recognition of the importance of social dialogue for labour and social policies for socio-economic cohesion • Adapting the social dialogue and instruments of collective regulation to new technological contexts • Diversity in areas of negotiation which go beyond pay and enhance working conditions, which include vocational training, gender equality, tackling the pay gap, and health and safety at work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverse social and political environment • Loss of union representation through the loss of unionisation.