



## Stimulate stronger industrial relations and social dialogue

Social dialogue represents tripartite exchanges between governments, employers and workers that are relevant to the economic or social policies under which the society lives. Industrial relations pertain strictly to bipartite relations between the labour force (employees) and its employers/management. Strengthening industrial relations and social dialogue is of great importance while addressing the impacts of automation technologies on the labour market, particularly on job transformation.<sup>1</sup> Beyond this, multiple studies have pointed out that automation technology adoption strains industrial relations and social dialogue.<sup>2,3</sup>

### Foster social dialogue at national, regional and local levels

Fostering consultation between public authorities, employers, and workers at multiple policy levels is critical to ensure a balance of interests of the stakeholders involved, to share information/views/challenges and to address issues that have been raised.<sup>4</sup> While consultation itself does not ensure a balance of power, because it has no legal or decision-making power, it is nonetheless part of the process that ensures that when legal decisions are made everyone's interests have been considered. For example, consultations can provide the government with valuable information on how the public will react to certain policy measures that impact them. In view of diverse impacts of automation technologies on the labour markets – local/regional, national, or EU/international, social dialogue should take place at different policy levels to encourage synergies in addressing common challenges and to improve knowledge sharing. To foster social dialogue, policymakers should initiate forums, platforms, projects that focus on it, as well as, to encourage active participation of stakeholders in these initiatives.

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<sup>1</sup> Berg, J., Green, F., Nurski, L., & Spencer, D. (2022, September 22). Risks to job quality from digital technologies: Are Industrial Relations in Europe ready for the Challenge? Bruegel. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from <https://www.bruegel.org/working-paper/risks-job-quality-digital-technologies-are-industrial-relations-europe-ready>

<sup>2</sup> Accenture. (2014). From looking digital to being digital: The impact of technology on the Future of Work. Unistra. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from <https://ccn.unistra.fr/websites/ccn/documentation/Travail-Transformationmetiers/accenture-impact-of-technology-april-2014.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Raconteur & Google for Work. (2015, August 25). Working Better together – A study of innovation and collaboration at work. Google Cloud. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from <https://cloud.googleblog.com/2015/08/working-better-together-a-study-of-innovation-and-collaboration-at-work.html>

<sup>4</sup> ILO. (2013, December 2). National Tripartite Social Dialogue: An ILO guide for improved governance. International Labour Organization. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from [https://www.ilo.org/ifpdial/information-resources/publications/WCMS\\_231193/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/ifpdial/information-resources/publications/WCMS_231193/lang--en/index.htm)



### Ensure effectiveness of the labour administration system

Labour administration includes public administration activities that fall in the domain of national labour policy. Thus, labour administration includes ministry departments or public agencies whose responsibility is to develop policy instruments, consult, inspect, and engage with employers, employees, and their representative organisations. Ensuring effectiveness, sufficient capacity of labour administration to perform their work affects how national labour policies, regulations and standards are being applied in a work environment.<sup>5</sup> This affects job quality, employee protection, social security, labour markets, as well as quality of social dialogue (Introduction to labour administration). To ensure effective work of labour administration at local/regional, national levels, attention is needed for collaboration within the labour administration system, skills/knowledge and capacities within each administration body, and independent evaluations of the labour administration system should be undertaken (International labour standards).

### Strengthen industrial relations

Sound industrial relations between organisations that represent employers and employees are facilitating information and knowledge exchange, consultation/co-creation, and support negotiations with the governments. For example, collective bargaining can help determine rules and standards for working conditions, terms of employment, and regulate relations between employers and employees.<sup>6</sup> Overall, industrial relations can improve the socio-economic environment, quality of jobs, support social stability that further promotes the population's welfare. The government can strengthen industrial relations by, for example, mediating in difficult bipartite negotiations, establishing regulations or structures that proactively engage employee and employer organisations with the aim of encouraging constructive dialogue.

### Ensure participation and effective functioning of employers' and employee organisations

Employees participate in social dialogue and industrial relations through organisations that represent them, such as works councils, labour unions, etc. For these organisations to exist and to be effective, the government should encourage participation in them and the sharing of best practices on effective management/functioning.<sup>7</sup> The same applies to employers' organisations. The government can take multiple actions to encourage this. For example, it can put in place regulations that obliges creation of representative organisations, (partially)

<sup>5</sup> ILO. (2010, February 25). *Promoting social dialogue*. International Labour Organization. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from [https://www.ilo.org/jobspact/policy/WCMS\\_DOC\\_GJP\\_ ARE\\_DLG\\_EN/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/jobspact/policy/WCMS_DOC_GJP_ ARE_DLG_EN/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>6</sup> ILO. (2013, December 2). *National Tripartite Social Dialogue: An ILO guide for improved governance*. International Labour Organization. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from [https://www.ilo.org/ifpdial/information-resources/publications/WCMS\\_231193/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/ifpdial/information-resources/publications/WCMS_231193/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>7</sup> ILO. (n.d.). *Social Dialogue*. International Labour Organization. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from <https://www.ilo.org/ifpdial/areas-of-work/social-dialogue/lang--en/index.htm>



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financing the work of these organisations, making the benefits of participation explicit (e.g., show how organisations can reach agreements beneficial for all parties), organizing events/forums for an exchange of good practices in management of these organisations.

**Foster transparency and collaborative culture at workplaces**

Historically, trust between employers and employees, and between their representative organisations, has been relatively low across the EU.<sup>8</sup> For example, at times employees and labour unions have been criticized for being unwilling to innovate and to find a compromise with their employers. On the other hand, in many instances employees have been unaware of upcoming changes in workplaces and have been omitted from decision-making that directly affects them. Overall, many employees raise concerns about a lack of privacy, use of personal data collected by an employer and about gender wage disparity. This leads to “us against them” mentality.<sup>9</sup> In view of this, there is a need to encourage transparency, collaboration, and collective decision-making. The government can establish transparency regulations/measures, promote benefits of a collaborative culture, collective decision-making at workplaces and support in acquisition of skills necessary for effective collaboration between employers and employees (e.g., communication skills).

Consider the following PILLARS and external resources to stimulate stronger industrial relations and social dialogue:

Title and weblink	Authors and year	Description
<a href="#"><u>Tripartite Social Summit, 19 October 2022</u></a>	European Council, 2022	The Tripartite Social Summit functions as a dialogue platform involving EU institutions at the presidential level and top management representatives from European social partners. Chaired jointly by the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission, this summit engages European-level social partners such as BusinessEurope, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), SGI Europe, SMEunited, and CEC European Managers. The main results are available here.
<a href="#"><u>European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)</u></a>	ETUC, 2023	ETUC strives for the EU to evolve beyond a mere goods and services market into a Social Europe, prioritizing the enhancement of workers' and their families' welfare. The European social model, which was instrumental in fostering prosperity and competitive high living standards, was prevalent until the crisis emerged and ETUC is working to return to this.

<sup>8</sup> Euwema, M., García, A. B., Munduate, L., Elgoibar, P., & Pender, E. (2014). Employee representatives in European organizations. *Industrial Relations & Conflict Management*, 1–17. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-08605-7\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-08605-7_1)

<sup>9</sup> Quain, S. (2018, November 26). Problems facing industrial relations. *Small Business - Chron.com*. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/problems-facing-industrial-relations-4840.html>



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<p><b><u><a href="#">Introduction To the Governance Of Labour Administration</a></u></b></p>	<p>Jason Heyes, Maria Gavris, and Maria-Luz Vega Ruiz</p>	<p>This book responds to the evolving global agenda on effective governance, emphasizing its role in fostering economic growth, social progress, and worker protection. Its primary focus is on how labour administration can bolster effective governance, exploring diverse case studies from developed and emerging economies. Each chapter delves into a labour administration issue connected to effective governance's core pillars, shedding light on associated challenges and potential resolutions. While many chapters concentrate on labour law enforcement, the book also considers public management elements within labour administration, including performance evaluation methods and inter-agency coordination.</p>
<p><b><u><a href="#">Labour Administration: An Introduction</a></u></b></p>	<p>ILO</p>	<p>This guide offers a fundamental overview of labour administration and serves as a foundation for users to navigate a harmonious approach between interventions promoting social fairness and those fostering economic productivity. It caters to both group training and individual learning, specifically targeting labour administrators in nations undergoing transitional phases and reforms linked to structural adjustment programs.</p>
<p><b><u><a href="#">Employment And Industrial Relations: Promoting Responsible Business Conduct in A Globalising Economy</a></u></b></p>	<p>OECD and ILO, 2008</p>	<p>The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises strive to align multinational enterprises' activities with government policies, fostering mutual trust between these enterprises and the societies they engage with. The primary objectives include enhancing the foreign investment landscape, promoting sustainable development, and bolstering mutual trust between multinational enterprises and the societies they operate within. To achieve these aims, the 41 governments following the Guidelines have pledged to engage in the unique implementation procedures outlined within.</p>
<p><b><u><a href="#">The Role Of Trade Unions In The Policy Cycle</a></u></b></p>	<p>ILO, 2015</p>	<p>This segment provides insights into the national employment policy procedure and highlights opportunities for trade unions to participate, drawing from the Guide for the formulation of national employment policies. Variations are expected in the practical execution of this process, potentially involving delays or simultaneous activities. Nevertheless, this comprehensive overview aims to aid in planning, foresight, and strategic decision-making.</p>
<p><b><u><a href="#">Employment, Social Affairs &amp; Inclusion</a></u></b></p>	<p>European Commission, 2023</p>	<p>EU legislation has instituted rights and responsibilities for employees and their representatives, ensuring their access to information and the opportunity for consultation through a series of directives. This section provides a compilation of directives, reports issued by the EU, and policy evaluations pertaining to worker information and consultation, encompassing both national and transnational scopes.</p>



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<p><a href="#"><u>Legal Instruments for Corruption Prevention In Public Governance</u></a></p>	<p>OECD, 2023</p>	<p>The OECD offers governments practical support and advice to strengthen integrity and combat corruption within public governance. It categorizes legal measures into three key domains: regulations governing public officials' behavior, the interface between the public and private sectors, and measures addressing bribery in international dealings.</p>
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