



INVOLVEMENT IN THE EUROPEAN SEMESTER PROCESS

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Dissemination Workshop

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Eurofound reports on the involvement of SPs in policymaking

Since 2015, regular annual reports in the context of the EU Semester cycle and the Employment Guidelines (and the European Pillar of Social Rights later on)

Assessment of the social partners on the quality of the involvement in:

- the **design** and the **implementation** of policy measures;
- the elaboration of the NRPs;

Around 150 respondents among social partners and government representatives

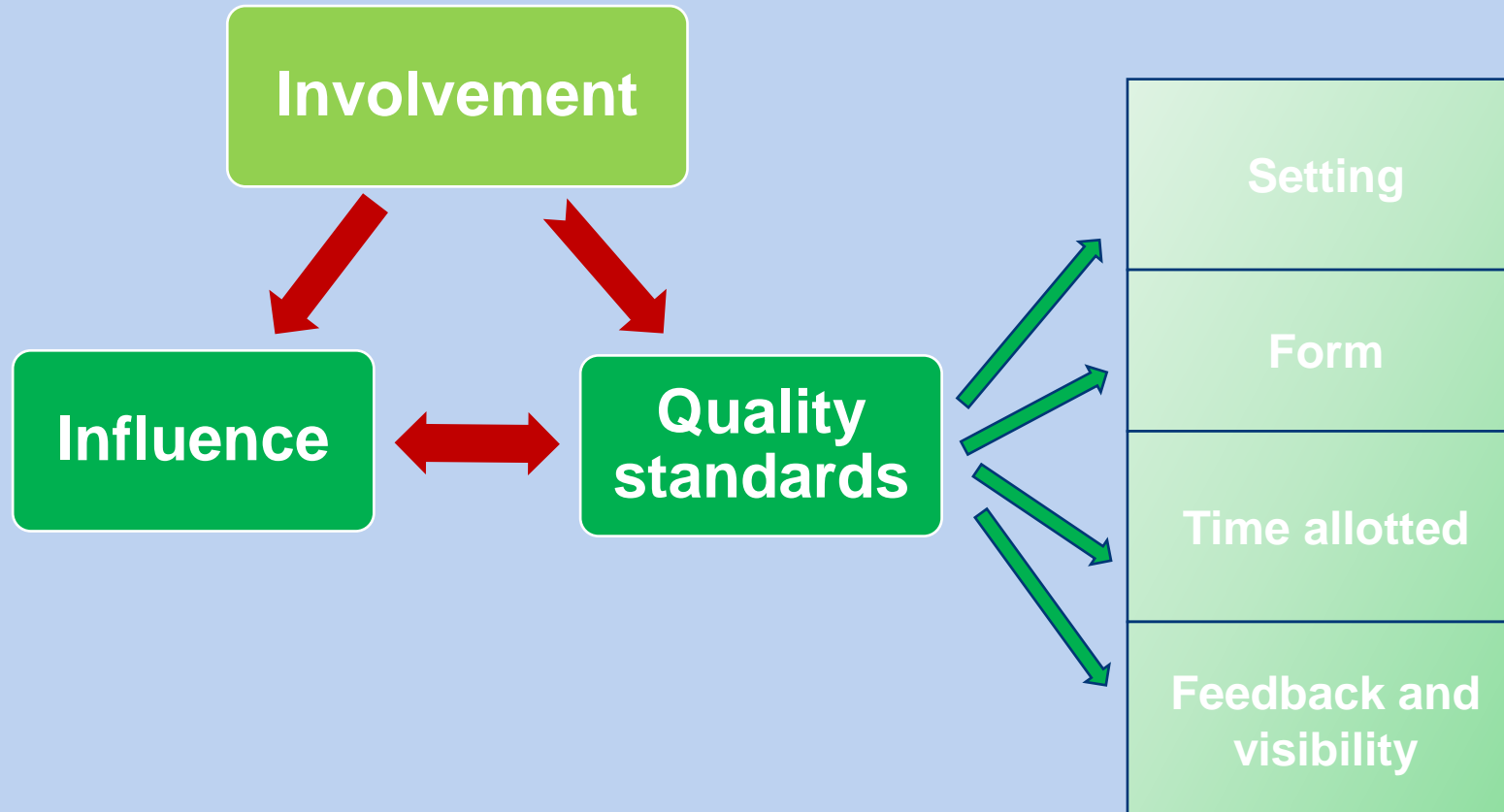
Mainly tripartite SD and focused on the cross-industry, peak level

It is only involvement at national level, not in the EU social dialogue structures

A series of reports



Involvement in the elaboration of the NRP: analytical framework



Main findings before the pandemic

Previous Commission revitalising SD and the social dimension in the Semester

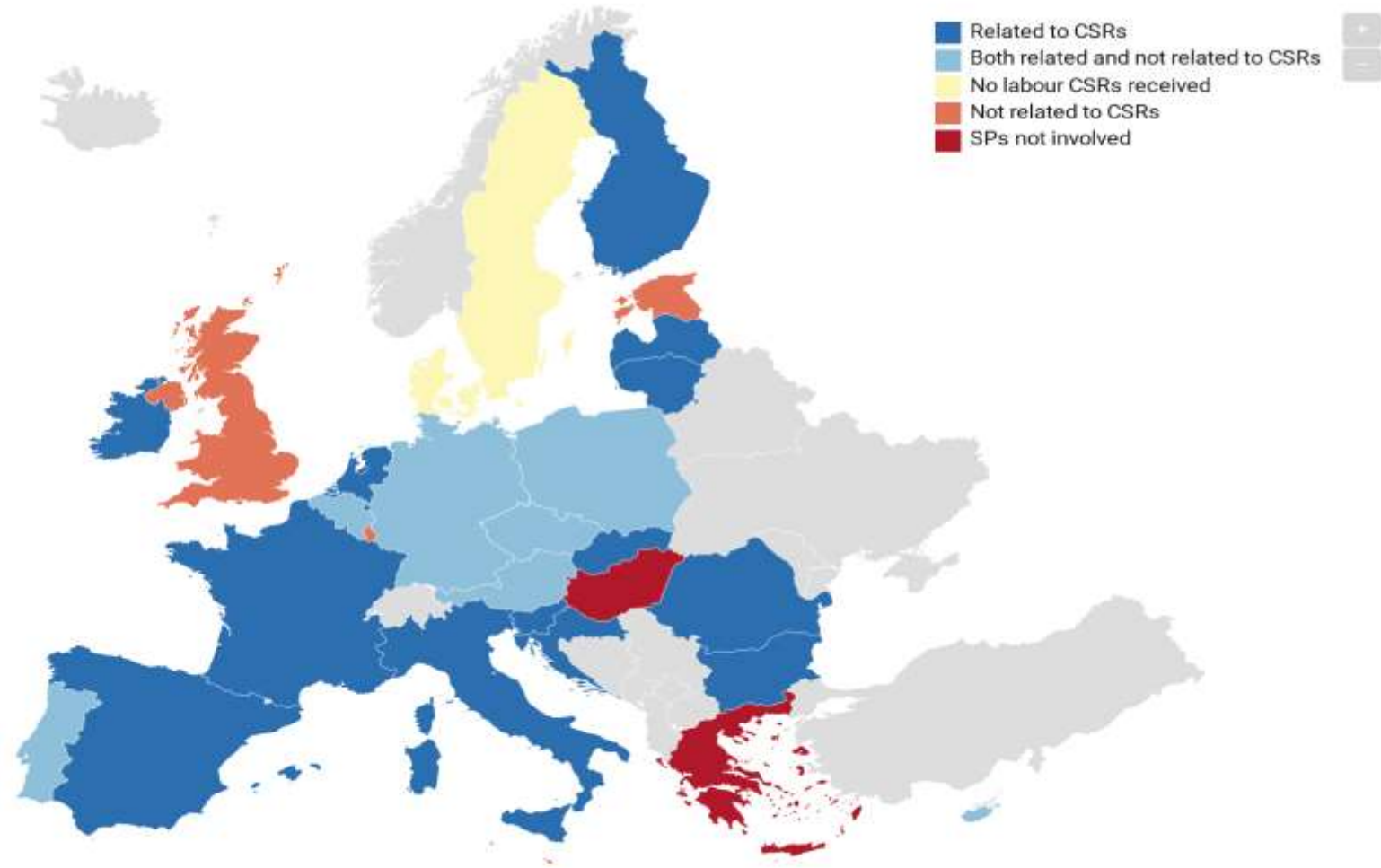
3 main groups in terms of practices involving social partners in policymaking.

- well-established SD structures working effectively: SPs are mostly consulted by government on social and labour issues
- SD institutions exist, though the SPs are not fully satisfied to a various degree;
- SPs state they are not meaningfully involved with SD itself appears to have stagnated

Some differences compared to the involvement in the elaboration of the NRPs

National assessments has remained relatively stable over the past years

Involvement of SPs in specific reforms and policies 2019

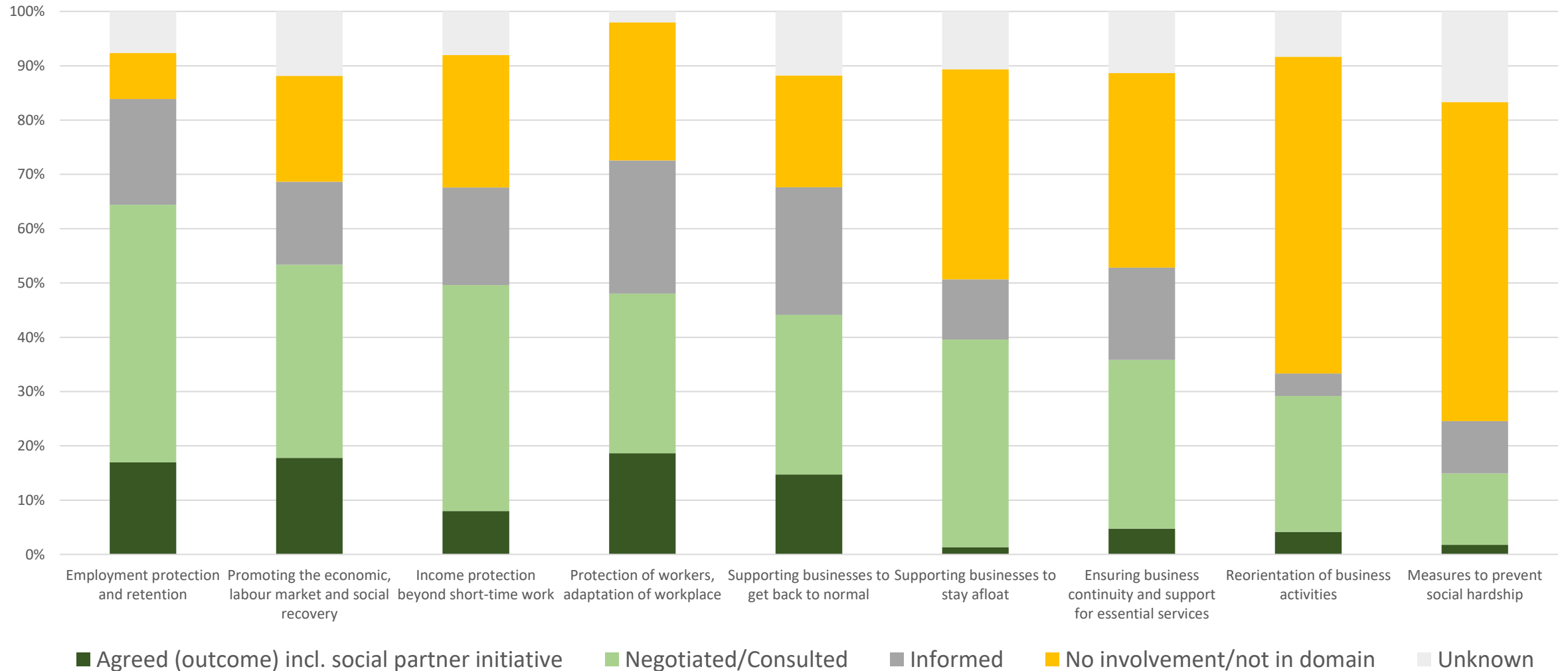


Source: Eurofound

Eurofound 2020 report on the involvement during the pandemic outbreak




- **TIMELINE:** information and data collection during May and June
- Involvement of SPs in the design and implementation of the **most impacting** employment, social and, where relevant, economic policy measures adopted
- 143 respondents among social partners and government representatives
- 2020: an evolving situation
- Additional information based on the COVID-19 EU database
- Policy measures were selected by EF national correspondents from the EF PolicyWatch database and contrasted and assessed by the social partners

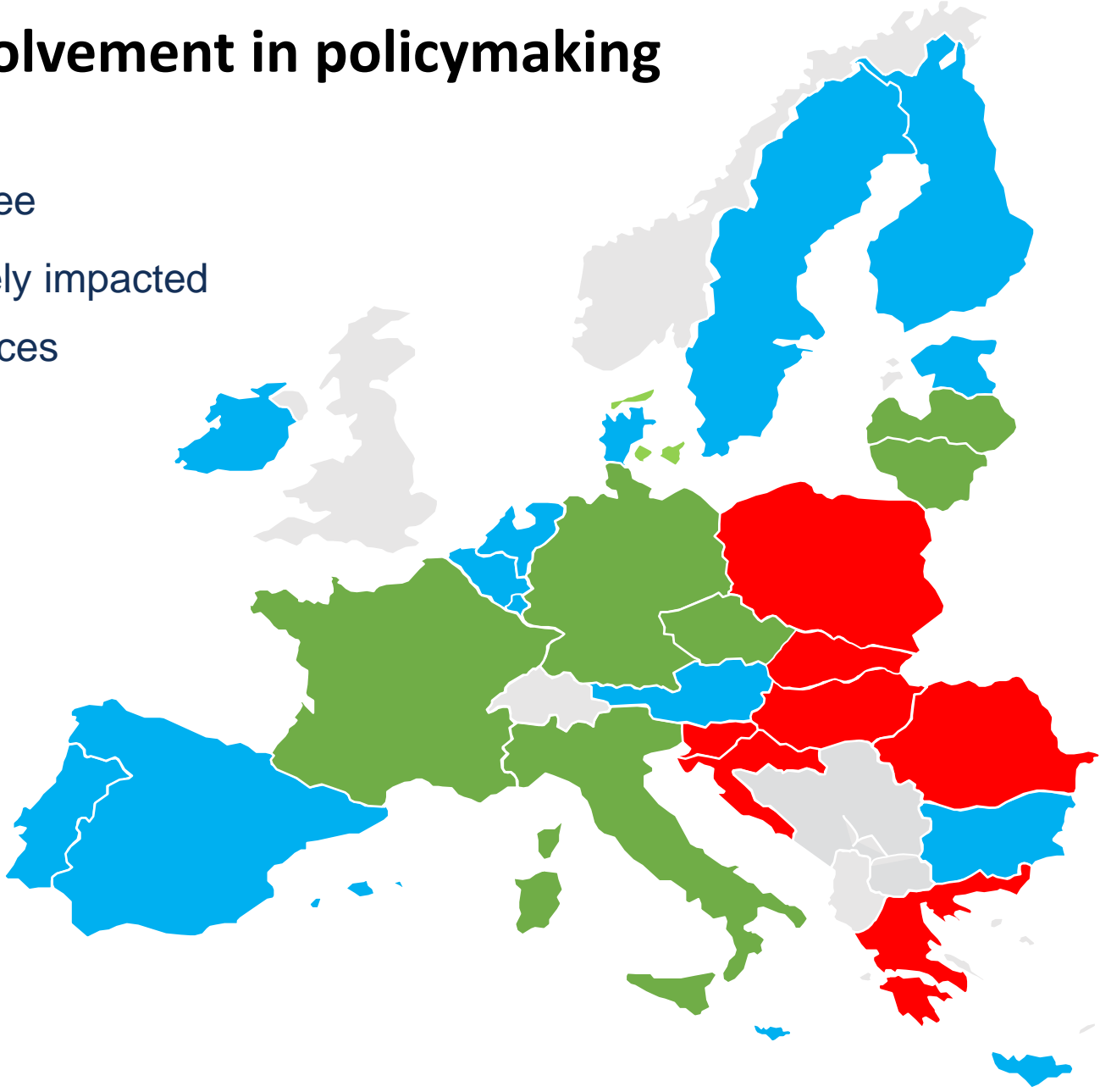
Involvement of social partners in the design of policy measures by thematic areas



Source: Eurofound, COVID-19 EU Policy Watch database as of 5 November 2020.

Overall satisfaction with the involvement in policymaking

-  Effective involvement, to various degree
-  Involvement in place, though negatively impacted
-  Insufficient or poor involvement practices



Further explanatory details...

Stable and effective involvement substantially unaffected	Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden
Satisfactory involvement to various degree	Cyprus, Estonia, Ireland, Malta, Portugal, Spain
... though impacted by time constraints or inadequate setting	Czechia, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania
Different views between social partners	Austria, Bulgaria, Luxembourg (unions more critical) Spain (employers more critical)
Insufficient or poor quality of the involvement due to different factors	Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Poland*

Note: One country can be put in more than one cell. *According to the employer organization.

Social partners joint initiatives and tripartite agreements

- Social partners autonomously promoted **joint actions** in a few countries shortly after the pandemic outbreak, e.g. in Belgium, Finland, Italy and Spain
- A few **tripartite agreements** were reached shortly after the outbreak in Spain, Denmark,...
- According to the Eurofound COVID-19 EU PolicyWatch database, close to 30 tripartite agreements have been reached plus 68 bipartite agreements registered, most of them at company level

Quality of the processes for social partners' involvement in the preparation of the NRP 2020

	High	Medium	Low
Employers' organisations (EO)	Ireland	Austria, France, Luxembourg	
Trade unions (TU)		Ireland	Austria, France, Luxembourg
EO + TU	Czechia, Estonia, Netherlands, Sweden	Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Latvia, Malta, Spain	Cyprus, Finland*, Italy, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia

*In the context of a continuous involvement in policymaking in labour market

Perception of the degree of influence in the elaboration of the NRP 2020

	Significative	Limited or relative	No influence	No involvement
Employers' organisations (EO)	Ireland, Malta	Austria, Cyprus (CCCI), Germany, Luxembourg, Slovenia	Denmark, Spain	Portugal (CCP)
Trade unions (TU)		Malta, Denmark, Spain	Austria, Cyprus, (PEO), Germany, Ireland, Slovenia	Italy, Luxembourg
EO + TU		Estonia, Latvia, Portugal (CIP; CGTP and UGT)	Belgium, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania	Cyprus (OEB; SEK and PASYDY)
National authorities (NA)	AT, BE, DK, EE, HU, IE, IT, LU, MT, SI	Bulgaria, Cyprus, Croatia, Poland, Romania		Portugal
All parties agree	Netherlands	Czechia, Croatia, France, Lithuania, Sweden		Greece, Finland, Slovakia

Summary of main findings 2020 (1)

- A significant number of policy measures were adopted **without timely and meaningful consultation** with social partners.
- **Time pressure** as the main issue
- Social partners are aware of the **exceptional circumstances** limiting consultation, although consider that governments could have done much better.
- The involvement positively **evolved** along the first months in some countries (France, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal and Slovakia).
- **Bipartite and tripartite agreements** have been more and more frequent after the first lockdown exit since summer 2020

Summary of main findings (2)

- Direct relationship between well-established social dialogue and limited impact of the health crisis. The opposite is usually the case, unveiling structural weaknesses in the involvement of the social partners.
- Health crisis has triggered **social dialogue both at sector and at company levels** as many policy measures need to be implemented on the ground
- Overall, the involvement of social partners in policymaking has performed better than their participation in the elaboration of the NRP:
- Social partners show a higher degree of satisfaction with the policy content of both the NRP and the CSR than with their involvement in the elaboration of the NRP.

Involvement in the RRP and the NRP 2021

- EU Semester revamped to integrate the RRF
- On-going study, currently working with 16 reports
- Significant delay in the preparation and submission of the RRP
- A highly complex elaboration exercise. In principle, it raises issues on transparency in some countries
- Usual (and unclear) problems concerning the setting: ad hoc committees and working groups, Tripartite bodies, bilateral meetings vs general stakeholders
- Unclear distinction between RRP and NRP

Thank you for your attention

More information:

Report “Involvement of social partners in policymaking in 2021” (Forthcoming)

COVID-19 EU Policy Watch

<https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/data/covid-19-eu-policywatch>

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