

# STRENGTHENING THE SOCIAL DIALOGUE IN THE HOSPITAL SECTOR

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- In Bulgaria, changes to the Labour Code are aimed at improving the representative criteria of trade unions and employers' organisations.
- Given the strong involvement of trade unions and employers' organisations in the elaboration of economic policies, through their representation in a tripartite council for social cooperation and the legal requirement to consult them on a number of government policies and decisions, the question of representativeness is very important.

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- In 2016 was the last census.
- There are two representative trade unions in Bulgaria - CITUB and Podkrepa.
- And there are five employers' organisations. Industrial Capital Association, Bulgarian Industrial Association, Confederation of Employers in Industry in Bulgaria, Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Union for Economic Initiative.
- Trade unions and employers' organisations are recognized at their request for representation at national level by the Council of Ministers for a 4-year period.

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- Unfortunately, we do not have one independent representative structure for the employers in health care. There are 5 employer organisations. For example, the Bulgarian Association of Employers in Healthcare is a member of the Bulgarian Industrial Association and the Association of Municipal Hospitals is a member of the Local Government Association. Private hospitals are members of the Industrial Capital Association, etc.

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- Social dialogue works well with employers' structures. More difficulties are noted with the representatives of the state due to the frequent change of persons in key positions (e.g. ministers). In the last few years, no Minister of Health has made a full mandate. Often the meetings of the Industry Council for Tripartite Cooperation are initiated by the Federation of Health Unions and the chairpersons of this council are constantly changing.

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- The underestimation of the importance of social dialogue in times of financial and economic crisis often leads to tensions in the system.
- Laws in the healthcare system are changing dynamically and are often chaotic.
- The Decrees issued by the Ministry of Health also frequently change.
- Much of these changes are unnecessary.

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- The Federation of Health Unions - CITUB over the years has succeeded in signing Collective Labour Agreements with almost all health ministers. In the Collective Labour Agreements, besides the topics „salaries“, „working hours“, „holidays“ and „trade union rights“, we have been trying to play a role in developing and implementing health services, called to meet the needs of the population and the training and retention of health care professionals.



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- Out of all 426 hospitals in the country the Federation of Health Unions - CITUB has trade unions/representatives in 379 of them. In 239 hospitals the Federation has concluded Collective Labour Agreements, in 76 hospitals they are under negotiation and 64 hospitals are without Collective Labour Agreements.
- On the basis of the Branch Collective Labour Agreements , the agreements and contracts are concluded in the hospitals.
- In the Industry Council, issues of digital literacy or refugee integration, etc. are considered by the social partners.



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- I would like to mention the round table on the effectiveness of social dialogue in healthcare with the participation of Mathias Maucher, EPSU and Tjitte Alkema, HOSPEEM.
- Their meeting with the Minister of Health, their participation in the round table led to serious conclusions, for which I thank them most cordially.

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- I think we will continue to exchange views on successful initiatives of the social partners e.g. in the field of professional qualification models, participation in safety and health promotion campaigns.
- It is important to note the exchange of views on possible initiatives in connection with the European Commission on cross-border mobility.

# Thank you for your attention!

