

Strengthening social dialogue in local and regional government in the “new” Member States and candidate countries

Presentation of overview findings



Methodology

- **Desk based research**
- **Questionnaire survey**
- **Telephone interviews**
- **Detailed case studies of 5 countries (EST, HUN, PL, SK, TUR)**
- **Provision of draft chapters for comment**
- **Overview**



Overview

- **Development, role and responsibilities of regional and local government and key trends affecting the sector**
- **Key features of the framework for industrial relations**
- **Development of sectoral collective bargaining and social dialogue structures**
- **Conclusions regarding linkages between issues affecting regional and local government in new Member States and the European sectoral social dialogue**
- **Key questions**



Development, responsibilities and key issues for regional and local government – General Trends

- **Reform post-1989; continuous process of evolution**
- **Decentralisation of functions from State to regional and local level**
- **Restructuring, contracting out and privatisation**



Structure of local and regional government

- **Single tier structure**
 - **SL**
- **Regions, local authorities**
 - **CZ, MT, PL, SK**
- **Counties, local authorities**
 - **EST, HUN, LIT, ROM**
- **Districts, local authorities**
 - **LAT, CY**
- **Provinces, local authorities**
 - **TUR**



Structure of local and regional government

- **Responsibilities**

- **Higher levels of sub-state administration provide functions not easily supplied at local level (e.g. secondary education, cultural activities, regional transport infrastructure)**
- **Lower levels provide key services (e.g. planning, waste, education, health and social care etc.)**



Sources of local government finance

- **Differ from country to country**
 - **No municipal taxes – direct central allocation (LAT, MT, SL)**
 - **Mixture of local taxes and central allocation**
- **Instability of resources**
- **Reductions in public sector funding despite overall economic growth (e.g. HUN, LAT, PL, SL)**



Employment in the sector

- **Lack of comparable disaggregated data**
- **Variation in the percentage of employment in public administration (e.g. MT twice as much as LITH)**
- **Increase in employment (CZ, HUN, PL, SK, BUL, ROM)**
- **Decline in employment (CY, LAT, LITH)**
- **Increase in health and social services employment (except BUL, PL)**
- **Decline in education sector employment (except CY, HUN, PL, SL, SK)**
- **Reductions foreseen**
- **TUR increased employment but change in contracts**



Restructuring and modernisation of services

- **Outsourcing, competitive tendering and privatisation perceived to be among key challenges in 8 out of 13 countries**
- **Privatisation particularly widespread for SGEIs and previously municipally owned industrial enterprises**
- **Contracting out used for a wide range of services**
- **Need for modernisation accepted but means by which it is achieved and impact on citizens and employment more controversially debated**



Key features of the industrial relations framework

- **Dominance of tripartite and enterprise level bargaining – but changes under way**
 - **SK best example of centralised tripartite arrangements; only country with significant sectoral dialogue**
 - **Enterprise level bargaining esp. in private sector – but also for public sector workers in Baltic countries**
 - **Centralised bi-partite bargaining in public sector (esp. for civil servants)**
 - **Autonomous social dialogue structures are weak**



Trends in development of employer and trade union organisations

- **Short history**
- **Organisationally weak**
- **Legislation restricts development of employers' organisations in the sector – currently under review**
- **Some organisations resist mandate to bargain collectively**
- **Trade union membership declining**



Sectoral collective bargaining and social dialogue structures

- **Collective bargaining structures affected by status of employees (civil servants or general public sector workers)**
 - **Terms and conditions for civil servants set through legislation or bi-partite national bargaining, general workers through local bi-partite bargaining (EST, LITH, BUL, ROM, TUR)**
 - **Terms and conditions for all public sector workers set at national level in bi-partite bargaining (CY, CZ, HUN, MT, PL, SK, SL)**



Lack of employers' organisations

- **Sectoral employers' organisations mandated to bargain only exist in SK and TUR**
- **Legislation forbidding/restricting employers' role (PL, EST, HUN, CZ, LITH)**
- **Legislative changes under way in PL, CZ, EST)**



Emerging sectoral social dialogue structures

- **Only BUL and TUR have formalised structures; SK has informal dialogue; HUN dialogue in water sector**
- **Information structures emerging in other countries**
- **Contributing factors are: EU accession; governmental encouragement; pressure from trade unions; involvement in European funded project and sectoral dialogue**
 - **How can these processes be supported**



Key issues affecting the sector

- **Similarities and differences between “old” and “new” Member States**
 - **Similarities:**
 - Public sector modernisation (restructuring, contracting out, privatisation and impact on HR management and service delivery)
 - Contraction in public sector budgets
 - **Differences:**
 - Weak social dialogue structures and organisational fragmentation
 - **Emphasis on information sharing**



Key questions

- **What are goals of public sector reform; how are these achieved and have they been evaluated?**
- **Who was involved in reform process and what accompanying HR measures have been used?**
- **What are the obstacles and drivers behind the development of effective sectoral social dialogue processes?**
- **What support is necessary for capacity building?**
- **What is the role of the European sectoral social dialogue process in this?**

