



# **European Social Dialogue at UNI Europa: Advantages, successes and challenges**



- **UNI Europa: Who we are**

- European trade union federation for services and communication
- Regional branch of UNI global union in Europe
- Representing 7 Million members, 320 trade unions, 50 countries
- Member of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

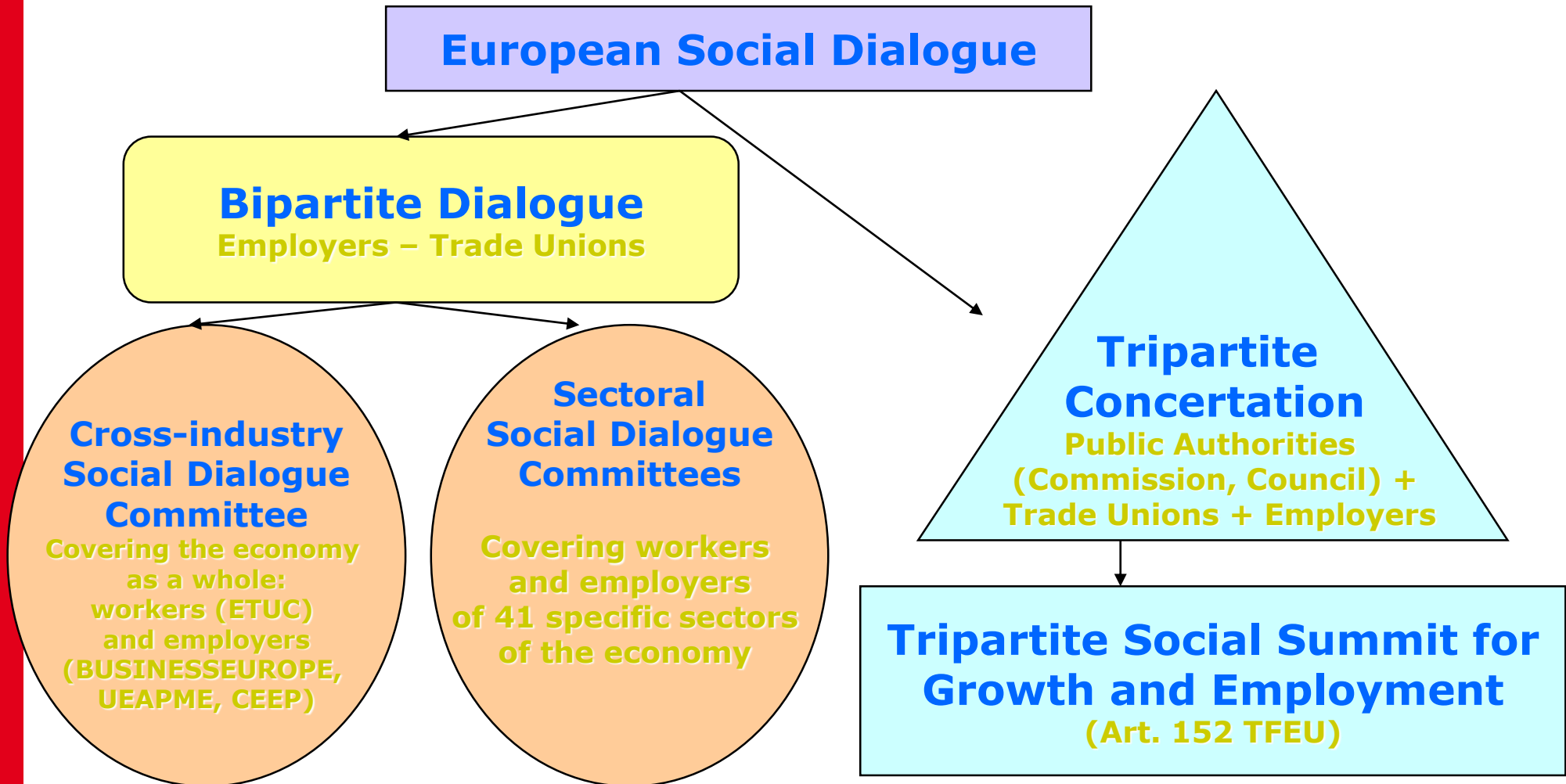
# • UNI Europa: Who we we do represent



**Employees in key services sectors that contribute largely to the well-being of European citizens**

- **Commerce**
- **Post and Logistics**
- **Information and communications technology**
- **Finance and Insurance**
  - **Temporary work**
  - **Social security**
- **Property services (cleaning, private security services)**
- **Graphical and Packaging**
- **Media and Entertainment**
  - **Tourism**
  - **Hair & Beauty**
  - **Gaming**
  - **Sport**

# European social dialogue: forms



# European Social Dialogue

Taking place on 3 levels



- Across sectors (ETUC)
- Within sectors (UNI Europa in dialogue with service sector employers)
- Within multinational companies (EWCs)

# Social dialogue in practice

- UNI Europa key social partner in many sectors: Commerce, Cleaning, Finance (Insurance and Banking), Private Security, Sports, Telecom, TAW, Hair&Beauty, Graphical, Post and Logistics, MEI (Audiovisual and Live performance).
- **Max 3/4 meetings** per year, funded and facilitated by European Commission.
- Work programme for **2 years**
- Results include: declarations, opinions, guidelines and autonomous agreements (even binding agreements)
- Not establishing European wide collective labour agreements
- Substantial part of workload of UNI Europa office

## UNI Europa and the beginning of social dialogue in Commerce

- UNI Europa and EuroCommerce are the recognized **social partners at EU level since 1993**
- Social dialogue for commerce has already started **informally in 1983**
- The SSDC Committee for commerce was established « formally » the **30/11/1998**
- Our social partner is **EuroCommerce**
- Work programme for 2 years
- **4 meetings/year** (maximum, due to reduction of EU funding)

# Short presentation of our work programme



Here are the main issue of our work programme 2014-2015:

1. **Adaptation to change**, vocational training and skill needs
2. **EU Employment Strategy** and the commerce sector
3. **Joint follow-up of EU policies** with a social impact on commerce
4. **Health, safety** and well-being at the workplace
5. Improving the **effectiveness of social dialogue**



# EU projects



- **Sector skills councils** (phase 3) : first year of activities (skills council reports to the social dialogue committee)
- **Capacity building project** to improve social dialogue in new EU and candidate countries
- Project on **youth employment** (waiting for funding)
- **Health and safety**

# The social partners organisations: mandates and functioning- differences



- EuroCommerce:
  - Represents **ONLY commerce**, has a mandate exclusively for EU sectoral social dialogue, is not part of a cross-industry employer's organization and has **no mandate for company negotiations** (autonomy of members)
- UNI Europa:
  - Represents **several sectors**; has **mandates for various social dialogues**, is part of a EU trade union organization and may hold a mandate for **company negotiations** at global level (coordination of European Works Councils, global alliances/agreements, etc.)
- Shortly:
  - The mandates of EU social partners do not always coincide
  - **Some issues are not dealt with in the European Social Dialogue**, but there is an exchange of good practices (working time, company policy, etc.)

# Evaluation of ESD@UNI Europa (1)



<b>1. RESOURCES AND COMMITMENT from trade unions</b>	
You attend meetings regularly	
You are involved and take active part in the debate	
You take a specific and active role in the implementation of the work programme	
You prepare the meetings in advance with your Union/organisation	
You discuss the outcomes with your Union/organisation and how to implement them at national level	
You communicate with the UNI EUROPA Secretariat in between meetings	
You think that the outcomes of the ESD are meaningful for your work at the national level	
<b>2. RESOURCES AND COMMITMENT from employers</b>	
Employers attend meetings regularly	
Employers from Central and Eastern European countries attend the meetings regularly	
Employers are involved and take active part in the debate	
Employers take a specific role in the implementation of the work programme	
You meet your counterpart from your country in the ESD regularly	
<b>3. RESOURCES AND COMMITMENT from the EUROPEAN COMMISSION</b>	

# The social partners organisations: limits and controversial topics

- **Some issues are not dealt with in the European Social Dialogue** because:
  - **Different mandate:** Eurocommerce has no mandate for company negotiations
  - **Topics where no progress** can be made/reluctance to talk about it: pay, working time, working hours, precarious work
  - **National competence/matters:** collective bargaining, company bargaining
  - The link to the **cross-industry social partner** organization is not the same
  - Our **perception of the issues** to be dealt with (or not) at EU level is not always the same
  - **Added value** to participate to EU activities may be **different**

# EU SD Challenges for trade unions



- **Resources** and capacity
- **Motivation** of employers and our members
- **Participation** – low and often disconnected to grassroots
- **Implementation** at national level
- Often only “**soft**” issues discussed
- Influence of **MNCs** on employers associations
- UNI Europa Management Committee: Launch of an internal evaluation of the EU SD

# Evaluation of ESD@UNI Europa (2)



<b>1. RESOURCES AND COMMITMENT from the UNI Europa secretariat</b>			
UNI Europa's secretariat provides sufficient assistance to your sector in preparing thoroughly ESD meetings and in implementing the work programme			
<b>2. TOPICS and MANDATE</b>			
Your Union/organisation has mandated a member of your organisation for the ESD who attends meetings regularly			
Your European sector's political decision making body (Steering Committee, Presidium) discuss thoroughly the work programme and approve it			
Your sector's political decision making body assesses regularly and approve the outcomes of the ESD including projects			
Employers are ready to discuss "non-consensual issues" (working conditions, precarious work etc.)			
Employers show commitment and political will			

# Evaluation of ESD@UNI Europa (3)



## 1. *STRENGTHENING TRADE UNION POWER*

ESD helps you in making progress in social dialogue and industrial relations at home

ESD helps you in strengthening your organising capacity

ESD helps you in strengthening your bargaining power

There is consistency and communication with other sectoral activities e.g. EWCs, trade union alliances and ad hoc working groups

ESD helps to strengthen your sectors' lobbying position vis-à-vis EU institutions

ESD provides further added value to your trade union work at national and European level

# EU SD Opportunities to support Organising:



- **EU SD Projects (funded by EU Commission)**
  - Create space to focus on EU countries with low degree of organisation and poor social dialogue (Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, Turkey etc.)
  - Make it possible to involve and reimburse EU candidate countries with low degree of organisation (Turkey, Serbia, Montenegro, FYROM)
  - Create opportunities to educate affiliates on organising strategies
  - Get in touch with affiliates who otherwise never show up
- **Use EU SD to mobilise and strengthen affiliates and not-yet-affiliates**
  - Invite them to participate in Brussels, make them spokespersons for certain topics
  - Opportunity for them to meet “their” employers for the first time / in a different setting – gives them a stronger stand at home!
  - They can feel the backup from UNI Europa and other affiliates
  - Platform for mutual learning



## EU SD Opportunities to support Organising:



- Dealing with burning topics at the European level to help solving them at national/company level (can be part of an organising campaign)
- Teach affiliates how to build trust and dialogue with employers (can make problem solving in the frame of organising campaigns easier)
- Direct access to employers from countries / companies where problems occur (trade union recognition, discrimination against trade union members, etc. – but can be delicate)

## Conclusions: EU SD and Organising



- EU SD is not a direct tool for organising. But it can provide a **good supportive structure**
- EU SD can help to **train and strengthen trade unions** and thus give them a better starting position at home
- EU SD can open up **doors to** trade unions from certain **target countries**

## To Do: How to better link EU SD to organising



- Key role: Our affiliates!
- Key challenge: secure follow-up after a successful SD project ends
- To do within UNI: Better link SCORE projects to European sector work and exchange about target countries

# Thank you!

## Questions?

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