

Social Dialogue mapping

Description scheme for country overviews

FINLAND

Sources:

1/ Eurofound Working Life Profiles <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/country/finland>

2/OSH WIKI https://oshwiki.eu/wiki/OSH_system_at_national_level_-_Finland

3/ ESENER-2 <https://osha.europa.eu/en/surveys-and-statistics-osh/esener/2014>

Introduction on Social Dialogue in MS (1)

There are no statutory regulations regarding representativeness, except for the central principles of collective bargaining in the Collective Agreements Act. The Act sets out the principles as follows:

A collective agreement within the meaning of this Act is any agreement concluded by one or more employers or registered associations of employers and one or more registered associations of employees, concerning the conditions to be complied with in contracts of employment or in employment generally. For the purposes of this Act, 'association of employers' means any association whose specific objectives include that of safeguarding the employers' interest in the matter of employment; and 'association of employees' means any association whose specific objectives include that of safeguarding the employees' interests in the matter of employment.

The strong role of the peak-level social partners is based on the tripartite consensus tradition, which gives the employers' and employees' central organisations a central position not only in the drafting of national-level collective agreements on wages and working conditions, but also in the drafting of employment legislature and economic policy. The power of the social partners in designing the pension reforms in 2014 provide an example of the importance of tripartite cooperation in Finland. These lawmaking activities will presumably not be affected by the seemingly changing role of the peak-level employers' organization.

Trade Unions (1)

- **About trade union representation**

According to the Employment Contracts Act, all workers, regardless of the sector they are employed in, have the right to join trade unions. The membership in trade unions in Finland is high, the trade union density having remained around 70% during the last 10 years. Explanatory factors for the popularity of trade unions include their involvement in pensions and unemployment schemes which make them a provider of individual security, even though other institutions providing similar services exist. The Finnish history of trade union prominence in working life and politics may also be a reason for the normalisation of membership in trade unions.

- **Main trade union confederations and federations**

The three peak-level trade union confederations are: the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions SAK; the Finnish Confederation of Professionals STTK and the Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland (Akava). SAK represents mostly blue-collar occupations, while STTK represents officials and clerks (mostly white-collar workers) and Akava is the trade union confederation for those with university, professional or other high-level education.

In 2014, the two biggest peak-level trade unions, SAK (the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions) and STTK (the Finnish Confederation of Professionals), started a process towards a merger that was planned to take place in 2016. The aim of this merger was to increase the centralisation and potential bargaining power of the employees' organisations. However, the project was abandoned in June 2016 after several STTK member unions and some SAK member unions decided to withdraw from it.

Long name	Abbreviation	Members	Year	Involved in collective bargaining (*)
The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions	SAK	992,716	2016	Yes
The Finnish Confederation of Professionals	STTK	552,400	2015	Yes
The Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland	Akava	596,947	2015	Yes

Employers' organisations (1)

- **About Employers' organisations**

All employers have the right of association and the membership in employers' associations is voluntary in the private sector. The employers' organisation density has been very stable during the 2000s, and was around 65% in 2013. There is a marked trend of organisations

merging, and this is expected to continue. The comparably high density is likely related to the power that labour organisations have in the collective agreements.

• Main Employers' organisations

The Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK) is the leading business organisation and represents the entire private sector and companies of all sizes.

Local government employers (KT) is an interest organisation for local government employers representing all Finnish local and joint authorities. It negotiates and concludes collective agreements for municipalities and federations of municipalities employing 422,000 people.

The State Employer's Office (VTML) negotiates and concludes collective agreements for the 74,000 employees working for the state.

The Church Employers (KiT) represents the Lutheran Church of Finland as an employer and negotiated a collective agreement for about 20,000 employees working for the parishes in 2014.

The Federation of Finnish Enterprises (SY) has the largest membership of all business-related federations in Finland. The membership consists of more than 115,000 enterprises of all sizes (although half of the members are solo-entrepreneurs), from all over the country, and encompasses the entire business spectrum. SY was founded in 1996. It is not a negotiating party in collective bargaining.

Long name	Abbreviation	Members	Year	Involved in collective bargaining (*)
Confederation of Finnish Industries	EK	16,000 companies, employing 980,000 people	2016	Yes
Local Government Employers	KT	All local and joint government employers, employing 422,000 people	2015	Yes
State Employer's Office	VTML	State employers, employing 73,700 people	2015	Yes
Church Employers	KiT	The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland as an employer, employing 20,300 people	2015	Yes
The Federation of Finnish Enterprises	SY	115,000 member companies, employing 650,000 people.	2015	No

Social Dialogue on OSH (2)

• General Remarks on Social Dialogue on OSH

According to an Eurofound study on Working conditions and Social Dialogue in Finland ^[21], the Finnish social dialogue concerning working conditions is a natural part of the activities of the social partners. Finland has a long tradition of systematically agreeing national income policies, which has also significantly influenced the [social dialogue](#) on OSH matters. The Finnish dialogue is characterized by openness in discussing and handling disagreements, but also by the goal of identifying some kind of common ground between the social partners.

The Finnish work life is based on the principle of tripartite collaboration between the government, the employers and the employees. All the key policies related to work life, occupational safety and health, social security and the labour market are negotiated collectively between the three partners (government, employers and trade unions) and agreements are signed on a consensual basis.

Policy Advisory Committees have representations from all the relevant administrative sectors, i.e. employers and trade unions, professional associations and other non-governmental organizations (NGO). The Advisory Committees are legislation-based and they have a recognized official status. The Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health is located within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. It is appointed by the Government Council. The members of the Committee are appointed to represent the most significant organizations of the social partners as well as other important stakeholders in the development of OSH ^[22].

• National level

At the national level the coordination of policies and activities takes place in ministerial groups (government level). The ministers of neighbouring sectors are expected to coordinate their policies:

1. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health^[8] acts in conjunction with the Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health in which the labour market parties are represented. All the key policies related to occupational safety and health are negotiated collectively between the three partners (Government, Employers and Trade Unions). The agreements are usually signed on a consensual basis.
2. There are also other Advisory Committees relevant to OSH in the Finnish Government Administration, e.g. the Advisory Committee on Occupational Health Services, which is located within the Health Administration of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health^[8].

The social partners include:

1. **The Confederation of Finnish Industries (Elinkeinoelämän keskusliitto, EK; Finlands Näringsliv)** is the leading business organization in Finland. It represents the entire private sector, both industry and services, and companies of all sizes ^[23].
2. **The Commission for Local Authority Employers (Kuntatyönantajat, KT; Kommunalarbetsgivarna)** serves as the employers' federation and national confederation for the local government sector, negotiating collective agreements for local government officials on behalf of local authorities and local government federations ^[24].
3. **The State Employer's Office (Valtion työmarkkinalaitos, VTML; Statens arbetsmarknadsverk)** undertakes collective agreements for employees and civil servants employed by the state ^[25].
4. **The Labour Market Organisation of the Church (Kirkon Työmarkkinalaitos, KiT; Kyrkans arbetsmarknadsverk)** serves as the employer's representative in concluding collective agreements on behalf of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church and its parishes and parish federations, and also represents the ecclesiastical employer in labour market policy lobbying ^[26].
5. **The central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions (Suomen Ammattiliittojen Keskusjärjestö, SAK; Finlands Fackförbunds Centralorganisation, FFC)** is a confederation of 20 trade unions in industry, the public sector, transport and private services ^[27].

6. **The Finnish Confederation of Professionals (Toimihenkilökeskusjärjestö, STTK; Tjänstemanncentralorganisationen)** is one of the three trade union confederations in Finland ^[28].
7. **The Confederation of Unions for Academic Professionals (Akateemisten keskusjärjestö, AKAVA; Centralorganisationen för högutbildade i Finland)** is a trade union confederation and represents employees with university-level, professional or other high-level training ^[29].

- **Sectoral level**

In Finland there are four sector groups (Industrial Group, Transport and Logistics Group, Private Service Sector Group and Local Public Sector Group) and 21 Safety Branch Committees in which different branches act in co-operation with the Centre for Occupational Safety (Työturvallisuuskeskus, TTK; Arbetarskyddscentralen) ^[30]. The sector groups and the occupational safety committees carry out campaigns and plan publishing activities and training courses. The labour market organizations are represented in the sector groups and the occupational safety committees.

- **Enterprise level**

The national Occupational Safety and Health Act (738/2002) ^[31] stipulates that the employers and employees shall cooperate in improving and maintaining safety in the workplaces. OSH matters are discussed between the employer, the employees or their representatives.

The Occupational Safety and Health Committees must be organized in workplaces with 20 or more employees. The Committee represents the main forum for collaboration at the enterprise and workplace level between workers and employers on OSH issues.