

Social Dialogue mapping

Description scheme for country overviews

SLOVAKIA

Sources:

- 1/ Eurofound Working Life Profiles <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/slovakia>
- 2/ OSH WIKI https://oshwiki.eu/wiki/OSH_system_at_national_level_-_Slovakia
- 3/ ESENER-2 <https://osha.europa.eu/en/surveys-and-statistics-osh/esener/2014>

Introduction on Social Dialogue in MS (1)

Rules concerning the representativeness of social partners are specified only in relation to the national-level tripartite body, the Economic and Social Council (HSR). According to tripartite Act No. 103/2007, only peak-level trade unions and employers' organisations that represent at least 100,000 employees and employers in at least five (out of eight) regions (higher territorial units, VUC) can participate in the HSR. Trade unions have to be active in several sectors. There is no representativeness criterion for trade unions regarding collective bargaining and the conclusion of collective agreements. (a representativeness criterion was temporarily introduced from 1 September 2011 to 31 December 2012.)

Trade Unions (1)

- **About trade union representation**

Trade unions have a long tradition in Slovakia. Membership in unions is voluntary and – with the exception of professional soldiers – no particular group of employees is excluded from joining trade unions. The operation of trade union organisations is regulated by Act No. 83/1990 on the association of citizens. As a holdover from the organisation of trade unions operating in the socialist political system before 1989, trade unions are usually organised by sectors. They are present in the private as well as public sectors.

- **Main trade union confederations and federations**

There is one dominant trade union confederation in the country: the Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic (KOZ SR). In 2015, KOZ SR associated 26 sectoral trade union associations with about 231,000 members. The second largest is the Independent Christian Trade Unions of Slovakia (NKOS), followed by the General Free Trade Union Association (VSOZ) and the Confederation of Art and Culture (KUK), all of which have a substantially lower membership.

Long name	Abbreviation	Members	Year	Involved in collective bargaining (*)
Konfederacia odborovych zväzov Slovenskej republiky (Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic)	KOZ SR	231,000	2015	Yes
Nezavisle krestanske odbory Slovenska (Independent Christian Trade Unions of Slovakia)	NKOS	About 5,000	2016	Yes
Vseobecny slobodny odborovy zväz (General Free Trade Union Association)	VSOZ	About 2,000	2016	Yes

Employers' organisations (1)

• About Employers' organisations

Before 1990, the only employer was the state. Employers' organisations were established in the beginning of the 1990s practically from scratch. The density of employers' organisations increased step by step and has been relatively stable during the past 10 years.

Membership in employers' organisations is voluntary. Employers are organised by sectors (similar to trade unions). In 2016, employers' organisations were affiliated to four peak employer organisations at the national level. Representatives of sector-level employers' organisations can participate in multiemployer collective bargaining. In order not to be covered by multiemployer collective agreements, some employers avoided participating in sector collective bargaining and/or blocked the extension of collective agreements as far as it was possible. Employers' organisations fulfilling the criteria participate in national-level tripartite social dialogue.

• Main Employers' organisations

From 1991, all employers' organisations were affiliated to the Federation of Employers Association of the Slovak Republic (AZZZ SR). In 2004, the National Union of Employers of the Slovak Republic (RUZ SR) was established as the second peak-level employers' organisation. AZZZ SR and RUZ SR associate sector-level employers' organisations and their members employed about 570,000 people in the economy. Besides AZZZ SR and RUZ SR, the Association of Cities and Municipalities (ZMOS) also represents employers. It associates employers established by cities and municipalities for the provision of public services. AZZZ SR, RUZ SR and ZMOS participate in the national-level tripartite consultations at the HSR. ZMOS also participates in multiemployer collective bargaining for the conclusion of collective agreements for public servants (employees performing activities for the public interest).. In 2016, employer organisations from the industry left AZZZ SR and RUZ SR and established a new peak employer organisation - the Association of Industrial Unions (APZ).

Long name	Abbreviation	Members	Year	Involved in collective bargaining (*)
Asociácia zamestnavateľských zväzov a združení Slovenskej republiky (Federation of Employers Associations of the Slovak Republic)	AZZZ SR	27 employer associations and 2 individual companies employing about 300,000 employees	2016	Yes
Republiková únia zamestnávateľov (National Union of Employers)	RUZ SR	23 employers' organisations and 16 individual companies employing more than 220,000 employees	2016	Yes
Združenie miest a obcí Slovenska (Association of Cities and Municipalities of Slovakia)	ZMOS	2,787 organisations with more than 125,000 employees	2013	Yes
Asociácia priemyselných zväzov (Association of Industrial Unions)	APZ	Six employer associations with about 125,000 employees	2016	Yes

Social Dialogue on OSH (2)

• General Remarks on Social Dialogue on OSH

Occupational safety and health is dealt in tripartite forums. The National Programme (OSH Concept) is discussed with the involvement of the social partners, and the National OSH Network provides the fundamentals of [national dialogue](#). Regional level plays an important role in the system: there are regional bilateral contractual agreements of social partners, and agreements between the labour inspectorates and the trade unions.

The 2002 new labour legislation introduced important changes in collective bargaining. Social partners in the private sector can negotiate in collective bargaining on any issue on which they agree. However, the scope of collective bargaining in the public sector is limited to issues specified by the Act on civil service^[13] and the Act on public service^[14].

According to the labour inspection reports the communication and co-operation of employers with their employees in the OSH area is insufficient in small enterprises: in many cases no representatives of employees for OSH have been nominated and the cooperation between the employers and the employees was weak. It was attributed to the lack of interest on the employees' side as well as fear of losing their jobs. Social partners report that social dialogue is the most fruitful in companies that already have a long tradition of it.^[15]

• National level

Social dialogue has been a permanent process since its start in 1990 until today. It is based on the **Tripartite Act**.^[16] The OSH Coordination Committee (Koordinačný výbor pre bezpečnosť a ochranu zdravia pri práci) was established with the purpose to coordinate state bodies' activities in the field of OSH. Members of the Committee include the National Labour Inspectorate, several ministries (Ministry of Interior, Corps of Prison and Court Guards, Ministry of Defence, Railway Police, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, Ministry of Economy – Supreme Mining Authority) representatives of social partners, as well as educational and research institutions.

The National Labour Inspectorate has concluded an agreement on mutual understanding with the Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic.

The consultative bodies that play a key role in the social dialogue on OSH related aspects are: For a long period of time, the Council of Economic and Social Agreement (Rada hospodárskej a sociálnej dohody – RHSD) has been the forum for the national tripartite social dialogue. In 2004, this body was renamed the Economic and Social Partnership Council (Rada hospodárskeho a sociálneho partnerstva – RHSP). Since 2007^[17], it has operated as the *Economic and Social Council of the Slovak Republic* (Hospodárska a sociálna rada – HSR).^[18] The Council is a consulting and reconciliatory body of the Government and of the social partners at the national level. It is located in the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. Each side delegates seven members to the body, which reconciliates standpoints to proposals of generally binding legal regulations applying to - among others – working conditions.

The social partners include:

- The *Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic (Konfederácia odborových zväzov Slovenskej republiky – KOZ SR)*.^[19] KOZ SR is a voluntary association of trade unions. It particularly seeks the strengthening of health and safety at work. The Confederation has several professional trade union labour inspectors. Some regional inspectors also provide consultancy services, helping the negotiators also in the area of OSH during the collective bargaining on sectoral and enterprise level.^[20]
- The *Federation of Employers' Associations of the Slovak Republic (Asociácia zamestnávateľských zväzov a združení Slovenskej republiky – AZZZ)*.^[21] The mission of the Federation is to ensure appropriate conditions for dynamic business development in the Slovak Republic and to protect and represent employers', businesses' and trades' common interests.
- The *National Union of Employers (Republiková únia zamestnávateľov – RÚZ)*.^[22] RÚZ co-operates with state authorities and bodies of regional governments, with representative associations of labour unions, commercial and industry chambers, as well as with other organisations representing local and foreign entrepreneurs and employers.
- The *Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia (Združenie miest a obcí Slovenska – ZMOS)*.^[23] The Association mainly defends the common interests and rights of the member municipalities.

• Sectoral level

Social dialogue about working conditions takes place on sectoral as well as local enterprise level where it has more factual and detailed outcomes. On the sectoral level it takes place in the form of collective bargaining and in some sectors also through sectoral tripartite/bipartite consultations. In the transport, post and telecommunications sectors effective sectoral tripartite social dialogue takes place.^[24] Although it is not common, in some sectors (e.g. chemical companies) social dialogue has a strong focus on occupational safety and health issues.^[25]

• Enterprise level

The Labour Code emphasizes that the employer, employees or employees' representatives for occupational health and safety and trade union organisations shall jointly co-operate in the planning and execution of measures in the area of labour protection.^[26] However, it is the OSH Act that specifies that

the employee safety representatives (Zástupca zamestnancov pre bezpečnosť) are appointed by the employer, based on the recommendation of the competent trade union body or employee council, or in the lack of the aforementioned bodies, elected by the employees. Its specific supervisory and advisory rights are laid down in the OSH Act. One representative can represent a maximum of 50 employees in specified “risk sector” companies, and a maximum of 100 employees in “non-risk sector” ones. If there is no employee safety representative appointed then the consultation is direct with the employees. In a company with more than 100 employees, a “commission for safety and health protection at work” (Komisia bezpečnosti a ochrany zdravia pri práci) must be established as an advisory body to the employer. It meets at least once a year, consists of employee safety representatives (more than half) and the employer’s representatives, mainly professionals.^[27]

Representatives of the trade unions are also entitled to information from the employer, to control proper implementation of labour legislation in practice and to propose measures to improve working conditions. Only the trade unions are entitled to collective bargaining, which is considered the most effective form of social dialogue.^[28]