

Social Dialogue mapping

Description scheme for country overviews

ESTONIA

Sources:

- 1/ Eurofound Working Life Profiles <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/country/estonia#actors-and-institutions>
- 2/ OSH WIKI https://oshwiki.eu/wiki/OSH_system_at_national_level_%E2%80%93_Estonia
- 3/ ESENER-3 <https://visualisation.osha.europa.eu/esener#!en/survey/overview/2019>

Introduction on Social Dialogue in MS (1)

There are no specific rules regarding representativeness of social partner organisations at national level. According to the Trade Unions Act, a trade union may be founded by at least five employees and a federation of trade unions may be founded by at least five trade unions. There are no criteria for employers' associations. Collective agreements can be extended in respect of wages, working time and rest time in the case of multi-employer agreements: that is, if the agreement is concluded between an association or a federation of employers and an association or a federation of employees or a confederation of employers and a confederation of employees.

Trade Unions (1)

- **About trade union representation**

Trade unions operate under the Trade Unions Act and the Collective Agreements Act. The first Act provides for the general rights of and bases for the activities of trade unions, and their relations with state and local government authorities and employers, while the latter determines the legal base of concluding and performing the collective agreements.

People have the right to freely found, join or not to join trade unions, except members of the Defence Forces (Kaitsevägi) who are in active service.

- **Main trade union confederations and federations**

EAKL is the largest trade union in Estonia and the main national level trade union, also the partner in national minimum wage negotiations.

The second largest trade union organisation is Estonian Employees' Unions' Confederation (TALO), which mostly represents cultural workers and public servants.

Long name	Abbreviation	Members	Year	Involved in collective bargaining (*)
Estonian Trade Union Confederation (<i>Eesti Ametiühingute Keskliit</i>)	EAKL	21,211	2016	Yes
Estonian Employees' Unions' Confederation (<i>Teenistujate Ametiliitude Keskorganisatsioon</i>)	TALO	Around 3,000	Since 2011	Yes

Employers' organisations (1)

- About Employers' organisations**

The rights and obligations to establish or join employers' associations are not specifically regulated in legislation. However, the Constitution (Põhiseadus) stipulates the right to freely join the associations.

- Main Employers' organisations**

The only employer organisation recognised as a national-level social partner is ETTK, which overall represents around 25% of all employees in Estonia. Its members include associations as well as enterprises. Although there are no representativeness criteria set in Estonia, ETTK is the largest employer organisation involved in collective bargaining and the only employer organisations involved in national level collective bargaining and hence it is considered to be a national-level social partner.

The biggest employer association in Estonia is the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (*Eesti Kaubandus-Tööstuskoda*), but it does not take part in collective bargaining, and concentrates on developing entrepreneurship and the economy as a whole.

Long name	Abbreviation	Members	Year	Involved in collective bargaining (*)
Estonian Employers' confederation (<i>Eesti Tööandjate Keskliit</i>)	ETTK	114 (altogether directly and indirectly it represents around 1,500 companies)	2016	Yes
Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (<i>Eesti Kaubandus-Tööstuskoda</i>)	ECCI	3,211	2016	No

Social Dialogue on OSH (2)

• General Remarks on Social Dialogue on OSH

The Ministry of Social Affairs ^[18] is the responsible body for occupational safety and health in Estonia. The policies, strategies, and development programmes for occupational health and safety are discussed in the Advisory Committee of Working Environment. The Committee has representatives from the Ministry as well as from the trade unions and the employers' associations.

Little research has been conducted on the connections between social dialogue and working conditions in Estonia. The main sources of information have been the Working Life Barometer surveys, but no analysis on role and impact of social dialogue based on the survey data has been carried out. The available research has concentrated on the issues of social dialogue or working conditions separately and it is difficult to discern connections between these topics. Some issues have been studied in somewhat greater depth, i.e. employee participation, including information and consultation practices and efficiency.

• National level

The Working Environment Council operates within the governance of the Ministry of Social Affairs ^[19]. The Council is a tripartite advisory body comprising 15 members and its main task is to devise proposals and express opinions on the development and implementation of working environment policies.

Following the dissolution of the Occupational Health Centre in 2004, the Centre's executive role in the area of occupational health was assumed by the Health Care Board (the Working Environment Department) ^[20]. State supervision regarding compliance with occupational health and safety requirements is the responsibility of the Labour Inspectorate ^[21] which, in terms of its structure and geographical scope of operation, is divided into Northern, Southern, Western and Eastern Inspectorates.

Social partners:

1. The Estonian Trade Union Confederation (Eesti Ametiühingute Keskliit, EAKL) comprises of 19 branch unions that represent state and municipal government officials, educational workers, health care workers, transport workers (e.g. road, railway, sea and air transport), industrial workers (e.g. energy, light industry, food industry, timber and metal industry) and people employed in the service sector (postal, communication, trade, hotel and cleaning sector workers, etc.). ^[22]
2. The Estonian Employers' Confederation (Tööandjate Keskliit) represents the largest number of employers in the local employers' organization and covers all economic sectors in Estonia. Within the European social model, the Confederation represents the joint interests of all economic sectors at both state and international levels as well as in dealings with state authorities and employee organizations. ^[23]

• Sectoral level

In Estonia there are no sectoral committees or boards. However worker representatives often participate in inspection activities and there is a close relationship between the unions (sectoral level) and the Labour Inspectorate ^[24].

- **Enterprise level**

According to the Occupational Health and Safety Act^[25], a work environment council must be set up in all enterprise with 50 or more employees. A work environment council is an internal institution, which contains an equal number both of employer's and employees representatives and where issues related to occupational health and safety are discussed.