

INTEGRATED PROGRAMME OF THE EU SOCIAL DIALOGUE 2009 – 2011
JOINT STUDY OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL PARTNERS:

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FLEXICURITY AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL PARTNERS

2nd Cluster Seminar Lisbon, 9-10 December 2010

EVALUATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY RESULTS

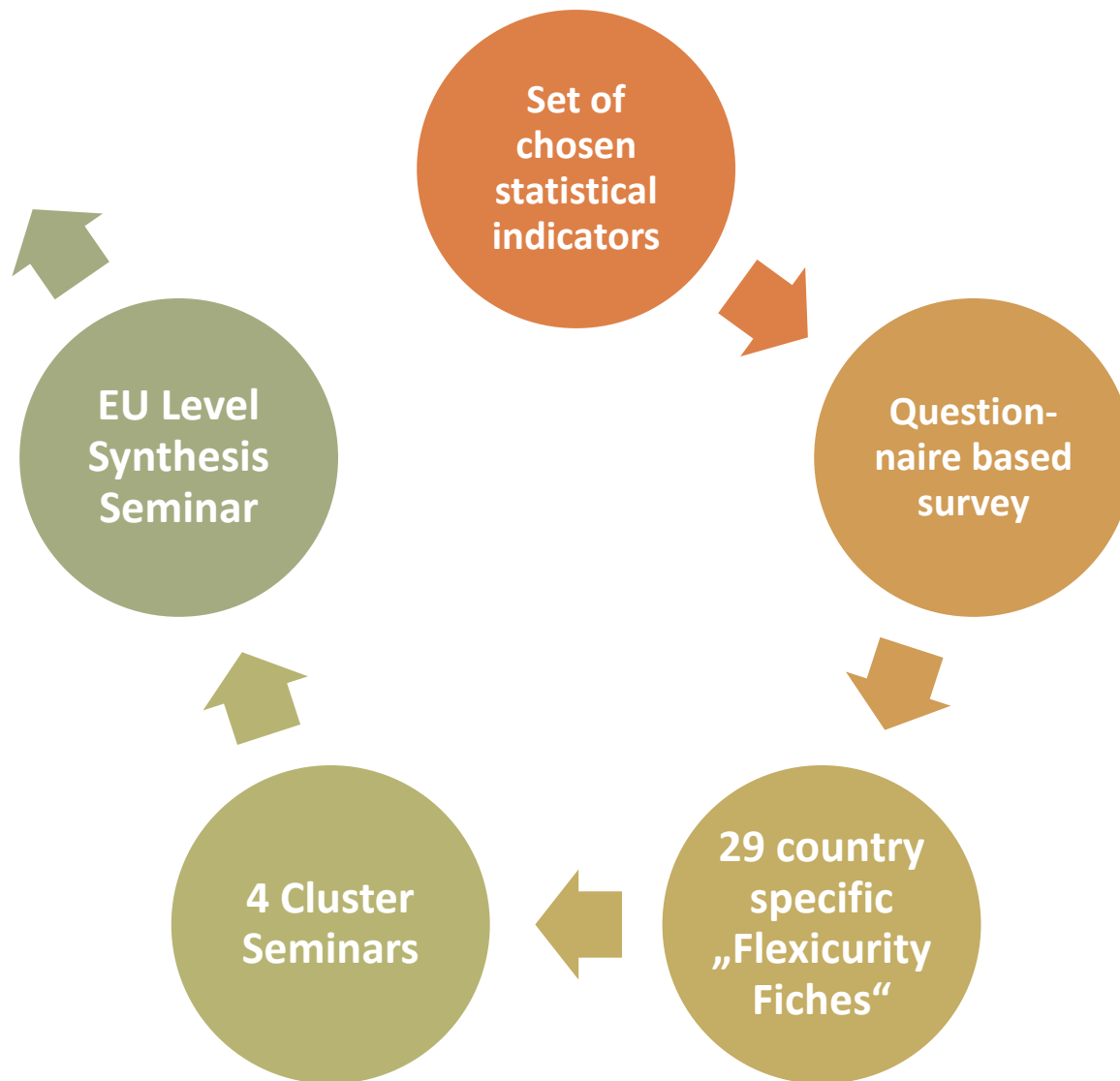
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SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND RESPONSE RATES

The EU Social Partners' Study on Flexicurity



The eight Principles of Flexicurity

1. Flexicurity is a means to **reinforce the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy, create more and better jobs, modernise labour markets, and promote good work** through new forms of flexibility and security to increase adaptability, employment and social cohesion.
2. Flexicurity involves the deliberate **combination of flexible and reliable contractual arrangements, comprehensive lifelong learning strategies, effective active labour market policies, and modern, adequate and sustainable social protection systems.**
3. Flexicurity approaches are not about one single labour market or working life model, nor about a single policy strategy: they should be **tailored to the specific circumstances of each Member State.** Flexicurity implies a balance between rights and responsibilities of all concerned. Based on the common principles, each Member State should develop its own Flexicurity arrangements. Progress should be effectively monitored.
4. Flexicurity should promote more open, responsive and inclusive labour markets **overcoming segmentation.** It concerns both those in work and those out of work. The inactive, the unemployed, those in undeclared work, in unstable employment, or at the margins of the labour market need to be provided with better opportunities, economic incentives and supportive measures for easier access to work or stepping-stones to assist progress into stable and legally secure employment. Support should be available to all those in employment to remain employable, progress and **manage transitions both in work and between jobs.**
5. **Internal (within the enterprise) as well as external Flexicurity are equally important** and should be promoted. Sufficient contractual flexibility must be accompanied by secure transitions from job to job. Upward mobility needs to be facilitated, as well as between unemployment or inactivity and work. High quality and productive workplaces, good organisation of work, and continuous upgrading of skills are also essential. Social protection should provide incentives and support for job transitions and for access to new employment.
6. Flexicurity should support **gender equality**, by promoting equal access to quality employment for women and men and offering measures to reconcile work, family and private life.
7. Flexicurity requires a **climate of trust and broadly-based dialogue** among all stakeholders, where all are prepared to take the responsibility for change with a view to socially balanced policies. While public authorities retain an overall responsibility, the **involvement of social partners in the design and implementation** of Flexicurity policies through social dialogue and collective bargaining is of crucial importance.
8. Flexicurity requires a **cost effective allocation of resources** and should remain fully compatible with sound and financially sustainable public budgets. It should also aim at a fair distribution of costs and benefits, especially between businesses, public authorities and individuals, with particular attention to the specific situation of **SMEs.**

Survey Design – the questionnaire

Main section	Contents	Sub-sections	Questions	Closed	Open
A	Details on the respondent				
B	Relevance, main national measures and trends	3	33	22	11
C	The role of social partners	5	27	23	4
D	Overall opinion on flexicurity	1	4	4	0
	4	9	64	51	15

Response rates

Country	Overall replies	Trade Unions	BUSINESSEUROPE	UEAPME	CEEP
Austria	4	1	1	1	1
Belgium	2	1		1	
Bulgaria	1	1			
Croatia	0				
Cyprus	2	1	1		
Czech Republic	2	1	1		
Denmark	4	1	1		2
Estonia	1	1			
Finland	3		1	1	1
France	3	3			
Germany	4		1	1	2
Greece	1	1			
Hungary	2	1	1		
Ireland	2	1	1		
Italy	4	3			1
Latvia	1	1			
Lithuania	0				
Luxembourg	0				
Malta	0				
Netherlands	2	1			1
Poland	2	1		1	
Portugal	4	2	1	1	
Romania	0				
Slovakia	0				
Slovenia	1			1	
Spain	2	1		1	
Sweden	3	2		1	
Turkey	1	1			
United Kingdom	1				1
Total	52	25	9	9	9

Responses

- 52 replies from 23 countries
- Only countries without any reply are Croatia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Romania and Slovakia
- Trade union replies came from 19 countries;
- 17 countries are covered by employers' replies;
- For 13 countries replies of at least one trade union and one employer organisations were received;
- For six countries only replies from trade union organisations were received;
- For four countries only replies from employers' organisations were received;
- There are seven countries where just one questionnaire was received (either from trade unions or employers' organisations);

Caution note

- Survey replies should not be regarded as representative for a number of reasons
- Response not necessarily an „official statement“ of the national member
- Coverage of social partners' in a given country differs significantly: full coverage only in Austria
- *Against this the survey results should be seen as a snapshot of social partners opinions and assessments on flexicurity*

Replies from different country groups

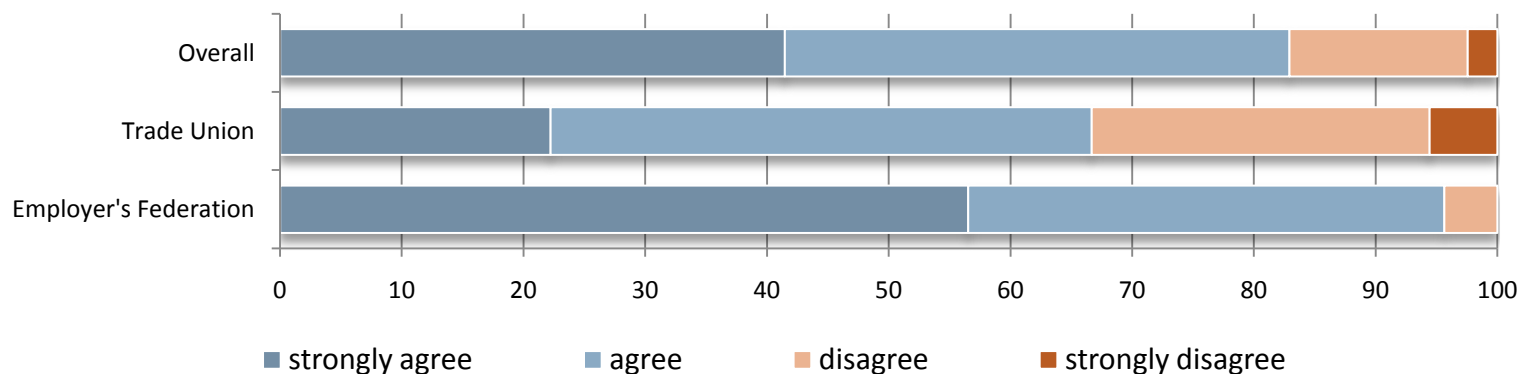
	Total	CEEC Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Slovenia	Southern Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Turkey	Northern Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Ireland, UK	Continental Austria, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany
Countries with no reply	6	Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia	Croatia, Malta	-	Luxembourg
Total number of replies	52	10	17	13	12
Trade union replies	25	6	11	4	3
Employer organisation replies	27	4	5	9	9

- ▶ Fairly equal coverage of four main groups of countries
- ▶ Rather weak coverage of CEEC countries and “new” member states
- ▶ Trade unions in Southern Europe more likely to respond than employers organisations
- ▶ In Northern and continental countries the opposite is the case

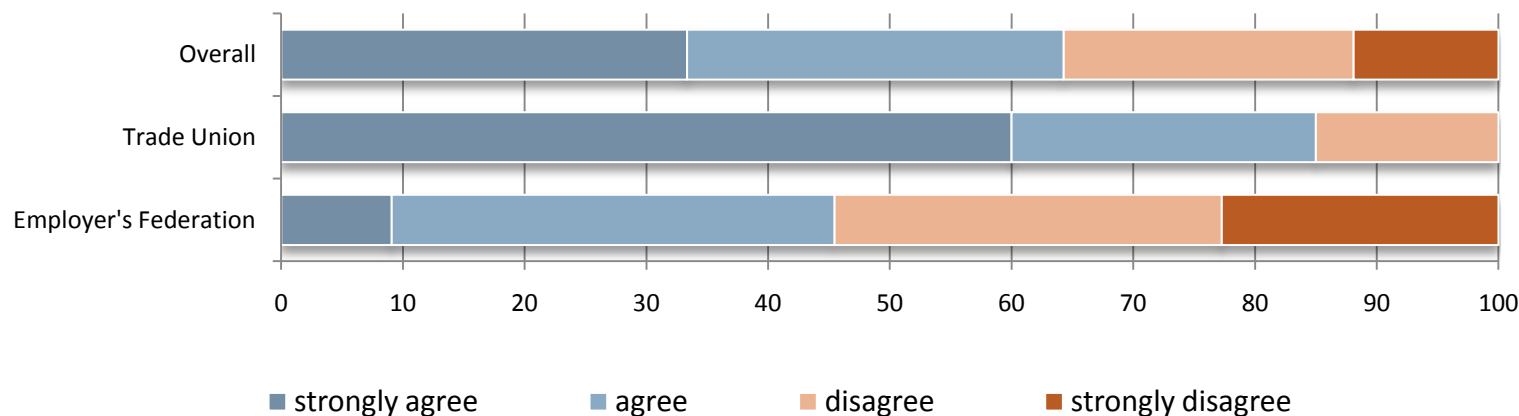
SELECTED RESULTS - CLOSED QUESTIONS

Overall opinion on the aims of flexicurity

If Implemented in a balanced and holistic way, the common principles of flexicurity can provide a win-win situation for workers and enterprises



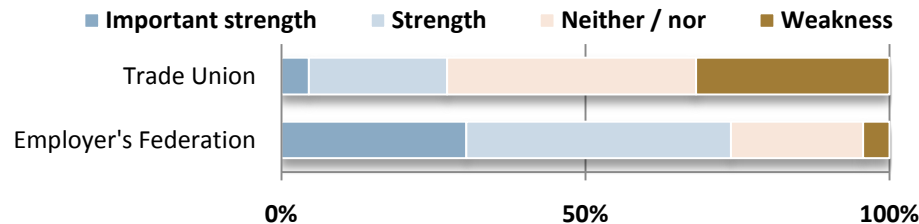
Flexibility has not yet proven itself to offer a balanced approach for workers and enterprises



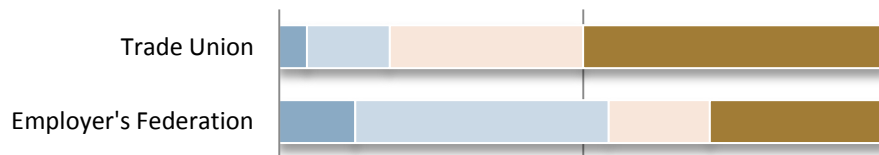
Areas of strength and weakness in the implementation of flexicurity policies

- Trade unions were significantly more critical in all areas than employers;
- Despite major differences in "the extent" to which issues were considered strengths or weaknesses, the rank order was similar for both groups;
- The strength/weakness ranking differed significantly between employers and trade unions in two areas: *lifelong learning*, *reliable and flexible contract arrangements* and *quality and productivity of workplaces* and also - employers saw these issues as important strengths:

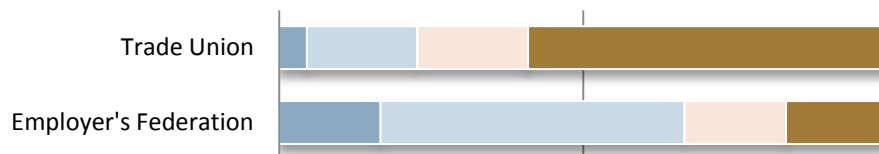
Lifelong learning



Reliable and flexible contractual arrangements



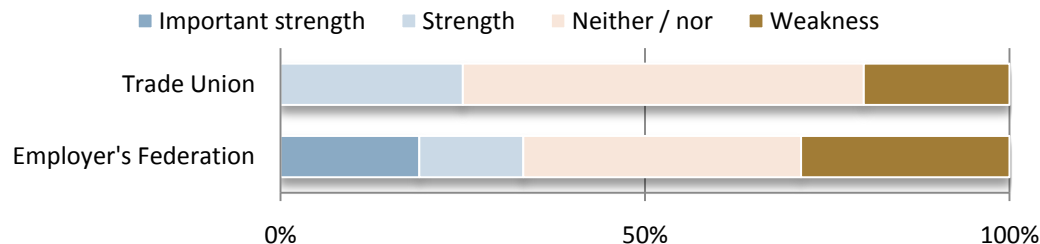
Promoting high quality and productive workplaces



Areas of strength and weakness in the implementation of flexicurity policies

- The employers' scores differentiated significantly between what they saw as areas of strength and weakness whereas the trade unions differentiated within a much narrower band and were equally unhappy about the national approach taken on most of the eleven policy fields.
- Both social partners saw the *financial sustainability* of initiatives as equally weak.

Assuring the financial sustainability of the implemented initiatives



Effects of the crisis on flexicurity policy fields and principles

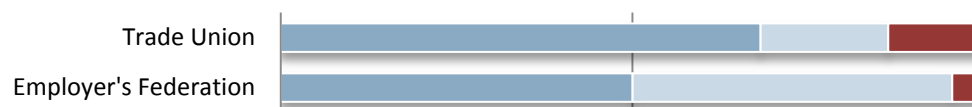
Both trade unions and employers regard three out of 11 policy/reform fields as having become more important in particular:

Lifelong Learning

■ More important ■ No change ■ Less important



Reliable and flexible contractual arrangements



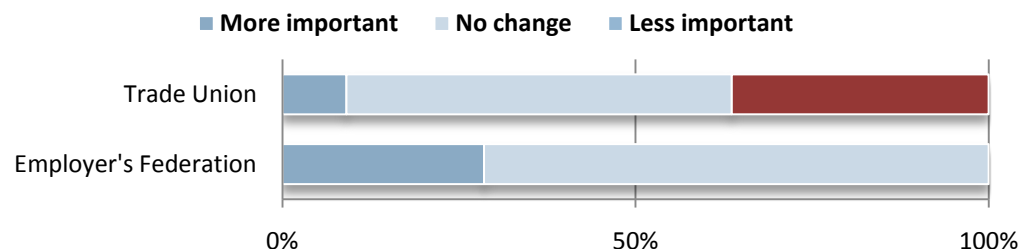
Active labour market policies



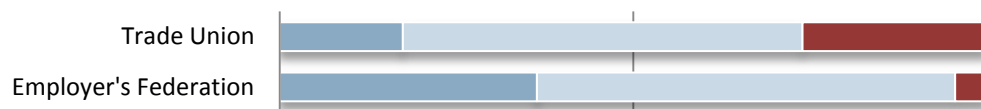
Effects of the crisis on flexicurity policy fields and principles

Both social partner organisations see little or no change in the following:

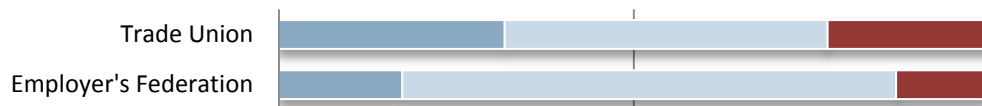
External flexicurity



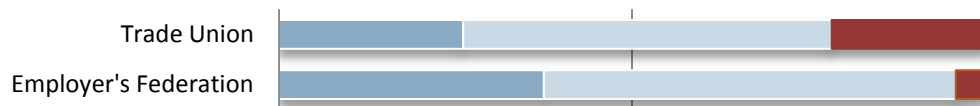
Improved upward mobility of workers



Gender equality



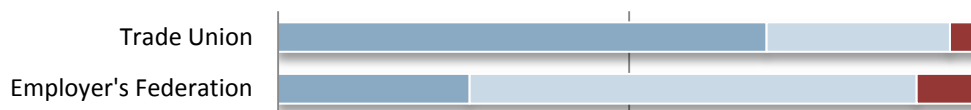
Promoting high quality and productive workplaces



Effects of the crisis on flexicurity policy fields and principles

Policy fields where trade unions and employers' organisations have quite different opinions:

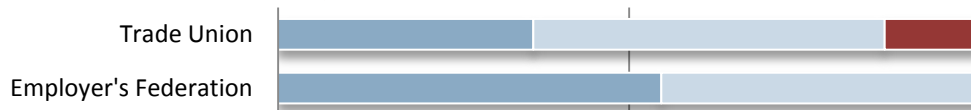
Supportive social security systems



Better access to work opportunities and improved management of job transitions



Greater internal flexibility



The role of social partners and social dialogue in policy making

“The European Social Partners recognize that in today’s labour market it is necessary to improve policy measures which address both the flexibility and security dimensions for workers and employers alike. Applied in the right way, the flexicurity approach can create a win-win situation and be equally beneficial for employers and employees. European Social partners agree that there is no one single model applicable for all 27 Member States of the EU.”⁸

Questions:

- General role of SP in policy design and implementation (consultation of the social partners by the government; role of social dialogue, policy concertation and/or collective bargaining at national, sectoral and company level; Effects of the 2008 global financial and economic crisis on the role of social partners) (C.1)
- Main instruments and action levels (lobbying, awareness raising campaigns, civil society initiatives, consultation by public bodies, tripartite negotiations, agreements, joint or unilateral initiatives or collective bargaining at various levels) (C.3)
- Dynamics of social dialogue over the last five years with regard to different fields of practice (Labour law reform and legislation; lifelong learning frameworks, vocational education and training; active labour market policy /frameworks of job-to-job transitions; social security policy and social protection; collective bargaining and collective agreements at the national and/or sectoral level and/or at the enterprise level; other measures adopted by public authorities in response to the current economic, financial and social crisis) (C.2)

What are the most important instruments of influence?

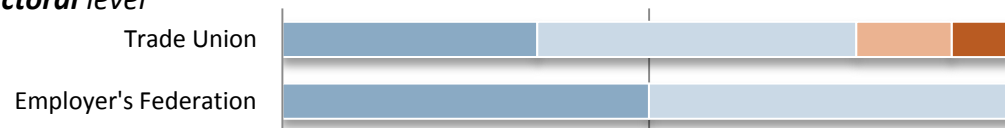
- Rather common experience in regard to most important instruments of influence
- Only marginal role: Unilateral initiatives and civil society initiatives

Employers' Organisations	Trade Union Organisations
Consulation by public bodies, tripartite negotiations and agreements (>50%)	Consulation by public bodies, tripartite negotiations and agreements (>50%)
Joint social partner initiatives (>50%)	Joint social partner initiatives (40%)
Sector level bargaining (>40%)	National level bargaining (30-40%)
Company level bargaining (40%)	Company level bargaining (30-40%)
Lobbying, awareness raising campaigns (>30%)	Sector level bargaining (30-40%)

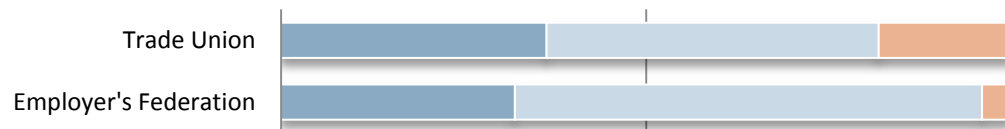
The role of social partners and social dialogue in policy making

- Both social partners believe that most important role they play is through sectoral and company level bargaining:

*Social dialogue collective bargaining between employers' organizations and trade unions play an important role at the **sectoral** level*



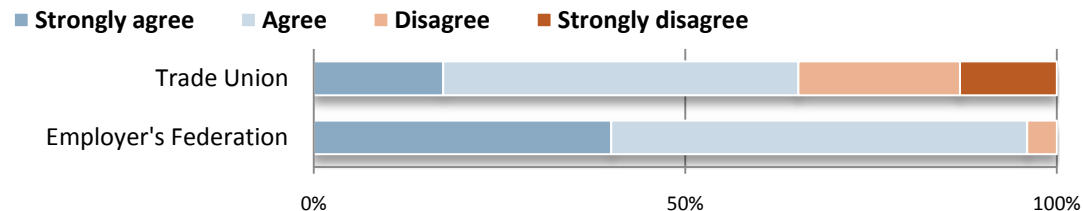
*Social dialogue collective bargaining between employers' organizations and trade unions play an important role at the **company** level*



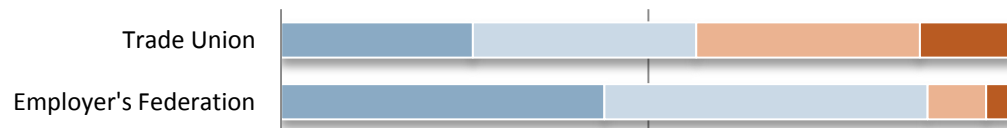
- Views of employers and trade unions are relatively close, but trade unions are generally more cautious in their assessment (around 20% of responses disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that social dialogue plays an important role at sector and company level)

The role of social partners and social dialogue in policy making

- More than one third of trade unions do not regard the consultation of social partners as a common practice in their respective country and a significant share expressed a strong disagreement with the statement that *“social partners are consulted by the government in the design of economic, social and employment policy reforms”*



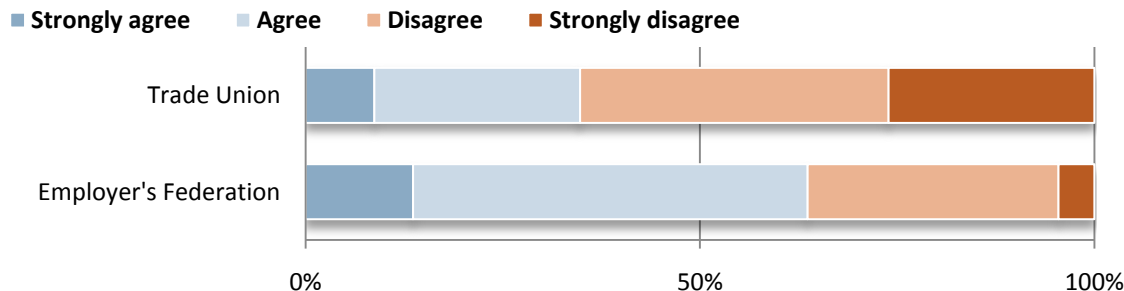
- 40% of trade unions disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that *social dialogue and policy concertation plays an important role in economic, social and employment policy making*



The role of social partners and social dialogue in the aftermath of the crisis

- Whilst a majority of employers' responses (64%) agree with the statement that the role of social partners and tripartite dialogue has increased in the aftermath of the crisis and only one third disagree or strongly disagree, the trade union view is the opposite
- Only a third of trade union responses report an increasing role of social partners and dialogue whilst two thirds report a decrease

The role of social partners and tripartite dialogue has increased in the aftermath of the 2008 global financial and economic crisis



The role of social partners and social dialogue in the aftermath of the crisis

Question C.1-5:

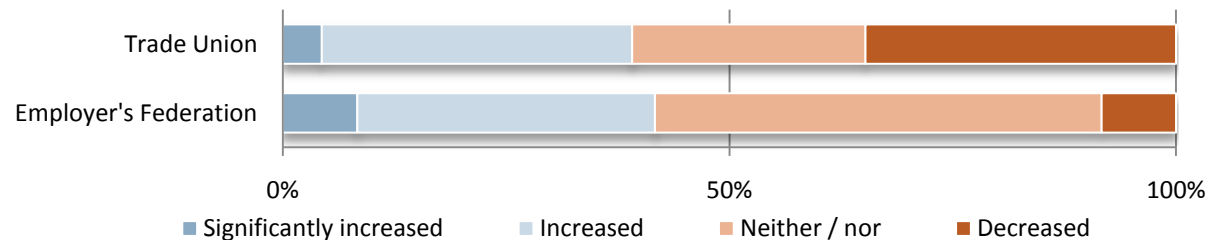
The role of social partners and tripartite dialogue has increased in the aftermath of the 2008 global financial and economic crisis

- Countries where both social partners experience an increase in their role: Austria, Czech Republic and Poland
- Further countries reporting an increasing role of social partners in the aftermath of the crisis: Belgium, Finland, Germany, Slovenia, Turkey
- Countries where social partners are reporting a contrary experience: Cyprus, Denmark, France, Portugal, Spain
- Countries where both social partners are reporting a loss of influence:
 - Italy, Sweden (both sides)
 - Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, UK

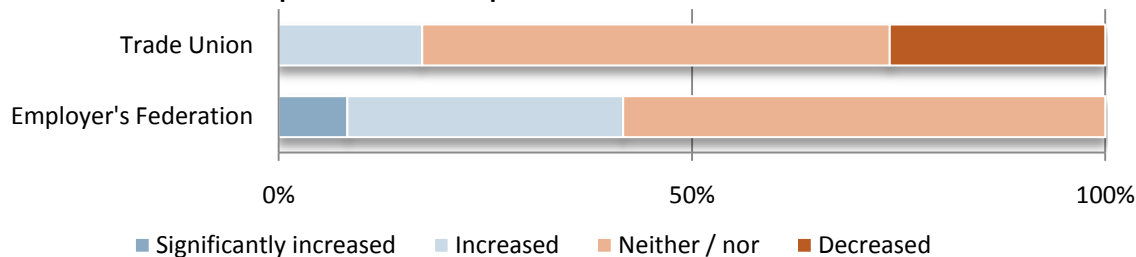
Country	Trade Unions		Employers	
	Strongly agree / agree	Disagree / strongly disagree	Strongly agree / agree	Disagree / strongly disagree
Austria	●		●	●
Belgium		[]	●	
Bulgaria	●			[]
Cyprus		●	●	
Czech Republic	●		●	
Denmark		●	●	
Estonia		●		[]
Finland		[]	●	
France	●●	●		[]
Germany		[]	●	
Greece		●		[]
Hungary		●		[]
Ireland		●		[]
Italy		●		●
Latvia		●		[]
Netherlands		[]		●
Poland	●		●	
Portugal		●	●	
Slovenia		[]	●	
Spain	●			●
Sweden		●		●
Turkey	●			[]
United Kingdom		[]		●

How has the influence of social partners and dialogue changed ?

- Almost universal view that social partner influence has not changed during the last five years
- Neither increase nor decrease: *labour law reform, lifelong learning, active labour market policy, social security policy, collective bargaining at national level*
- Around 40% of social partners believe that the influence has increased in the context of *measures adopted in response to the 2008 global financial and economic crisis* - trade unions as well as employers' organisations seem to experience a similar trend



- Only area of difference relates to *company level collective bargaining* - area that has increased during the last five years (>40%) according to employers – whereas only around 15% of trade union respondents report this



COMMENTS BY NATIONAL SOCIAL PARTNERS AND GOOD PRACTICE

Qualitative Responses

- Nearly every respondent used the opportunity to comment on the survey
- B.1 reflects a large variety of initiatives, experience and information on national background in the 11 policy fields
- Also many respondents stressed experience of good practice
- Open space used to summarize general positions on flexicurity, national backgrounds and frameworks and current trends as well as general challenges from the national point of view

Question	Number of survey responses
B.1: Qualitative comments on eleven policy fields of flexicurity	46
C. 4: Good practice Number of replies with reference to good practice experience	42
C.5: Open space for general remarks	22

Good Practice Examples

Country	Number of cases	Reported by trade unions	Reported by employers organisations
Austria	5	-	5
Belgium	1	1	-
Bulgaria	2	2	_*
Cyprus	1	-	1
Czech Republic	4	2	2
Denmark	6	2	4
Estonia	2	2	-
Finland	3	_*	3
France	3	3	_*
Germany	7	1	6
Greece	0	-	_*
Hungary	1	1	-
Ireland	2	1	1
Italy	7	7	-
Latvia	3	3	_*
Netherlands	6	3	3
Poland	2	-	2
Portugal	3	2	1
Slovenia	0	_*	-
Spain	1	-	1
Sweden	3	2	1
Turkey	2	2	_*
United Kingdom	0	_*	-
Total	64	34	30

- 64 cases reported from 19 out of 23 countries
- Up to six cases reported from single countries
- Most cases/examples reported in the following policy fields:
 - Lifelong learning and mobility
 - Contractual arrangements and internal flexicurity (working time)
 - Active labour market policy, job transition
- Much less:
 - High quality workplaces
 - Gender equality, work-life balance
- 6 cases illustrating national flexicurity pathways and alternatives to flexicurity

Good Practice – Overview of the cluster countries

Country	Type / title of good practice case	Reported by	Flexicurity principle addressed
Cyprus	– Cyprus Employers & Industrialists Federation - Annual “Corporate Social Responsibility” award	OEB/ BE	– Internal flexicurity
Germany	– Employers initiatives on work-life-balance – “Employment Bridge Bavaria” – Service Centre VET and further training of the Bavarian electric and metalworking industry employers	BDA / BE	– Work-life-balance – Job transition – Lifelong learning
Germany	– possibility in a number of labor law provisions to derogate from the legal standard through collective agreements of social partners	ZDH / UEAPME	– Contractual arrangements
Germany	– “ <i>mehrwert.berlin</i> ” - public enterprises try to facilitate the entry of people at the margins of the labor markets. – Promoting alliances and networks for future orientated jobs (e.g. renewable energies)	BVÖD / CEEP	– Inclusion and job transition
Germany	– Initiative “good work”	DGB / ETUC	– Alternatives to flexicurity – High quality and productive workplaces
Lithuania	– <i>No reply to the survey</i>		
Portugal	– Collective Agreement between the Association of Construction and Public Works Companies and SETACCOP (UGT-affiliated union) – Public Employer Collective Agreement between the Social Security Institute and SINTAP (UGT-affiliated union)	UGT / ETUC	– Working time
Portugal	– 2008 “Tripartite Agreement for a new System of Labour Relations Regulation, and Policies of Employment and Social Protection in Portugal”	CIP / BE	– Contractual arrangements – Social security
Romania	– <i>No reply to the survey</i>		
Sweden	– Collective agreements on outplacement services (TRR) – Personalized services of trade unions to individual members on issues such as social security or career development	TCO / ETUC	– Job transition
Turkey	– Agreement in metal sector to reconstitute working conditions during the economic crisis for 18 months – Short working benefits	TURK IS / ETUC	– Contractual arrangement – Internal flexicurity

- 22 out of 52 used the opportunity to comment on the survey. More comments received from trade unions (15) than from employers organisations (7)
- Responses from countries represented in this cluster only from *Portugal*, *Sweden* and *Turkey*

PT	CIP	CIP sees Flexicurity with great interest since it can create greater security through better opportunities on the labour market. The implementation of Flexicurity and its common principles depends to a great extent on the national social and economic context. However, regardless of the above mentioned national context, the participation of social partners in the design and implementation of Flexicurity policies is fundamental. In fact, the social partners having a thorough knowledge of the reality are the ones that are best placed to develop and implement the Flexicurity policies. Such participation can occur within bilateral or tripartite social dialogue at national level or, namely, within the collective bargaining. In CIP perspective the best way to promote and implement the Flexicurity policies are through collective bargaining processes. The participation of the social partners in the Flexicurity policies doesn't jeopardize naturally the overall competence and responsibilities of the governments.
PT	CGTP	All questions relating to flexicurity should be the object of collective bargaining.
PT	UGT	We draw your attention to the two different aspects of our answer to the present questionnaire: A) We tried to answer to the questionnaire with effort and good will, since we find it extremely limited and difficult to read as far as the genesis of the questions is concerned. We consider that the questions are devised to obtain previously defined objectives and not so much to try to understand how the flexicurity principles are being implemented in the different countries the questionnaire was sent to. B) We chose not to answer section D, since we find the questions too guided and any answer may lead to an interpretation differing from our point of view on this subject. <i>Example:</i> We agree with internal flexicurity as regards working time adaptability through collective bargaining. We disagree of a partial or total implementation of the external flexicurity principles, since the regulation of our legislation is more than enough.
SE	Företagarna	The term flexicurity has been given a too broad content in our view. For Företagarna it is more about liberate labour law connected with sufficient social benefits and good opportunities to get new job if needed, made possible by good conditions for business and mobility.
SE	LO	Functional flexicurity is a better solution then internal flexicurity. The idea is to adapt the company's production to the new market situation, instead of the numerical number of worked hours. It is beneficial if the work force is multi-skilled and able to rotate to other work tasks. A more creative work organisation also stimulates innovations. Both in the Swedish industry sector and in the municipal sector are trade large scale union initiatives in this area.
TK	TURK-İS	The negotiations between employers and employees in working relations to be organized have an initial role in industrial relations. However, the protectionist roles of unions are restricted because of the insufficient number of organized workers under the scope of collective bargaining agreements.