

Professor Dušan Mojić, PhD

University of Belgrade

Faculty of Philosophy

Department of Sociology

E-mail: dmojic@f.bg.ac.rs; dusan.mojic@ekof.bg.ac.rs

Phone: + 381 64 261 86 98

Minutes of the Meeting



Topic

*Collective bargaining and environmental responsibility – challenges and perspectives for
transport and public sector – CERP*

Belgrade, November 2024



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Minutes of the Meeting

Meeting of Researchers and Partners

Belgrade, November 14, 2024

After the kick-off meeting in Malaga at the beginning of the project (February 2024), this was the second face-to-face meeting of the researchers and project partners. It was a great opportunity to summarise the activities so far and to discuss and plan the next planned activities within this project.

After the registration, the participants were welcomed by Ángel Lozano Hidalgo on behalf of the beneficiary of the project, CSIT Unión Profesional. Mr Lozano reminded all participants of the importance of the topic of this project, especially in European comparison. The particular strength of the project is the participation of EU countries (Spain, Portugal, Poland and Greece) and EU candidate countries (Serbia and North Macedonia).

The Secretary General of CSIT Unión Profesional José Ángel Montero also addressed the participants, remembering the victims of the disaster in Valencia caused by the recent catastrophic weather conditions as part of the general climate change in recent decades. All participants expressed their deepest condolences to the members of the Spanish research team and the Spanish people in general. Mr Montero also stressed the importance of looking at environmental responsibility from the perspective of collective bargaining, despite all the difficulties. In this context, he emphasised the need to take a closer look at the EU framework when shaping collective bargaining. Improving the framework for collective bargaining in the promotion, creation and implementation of sustainable development policies at national and European level is particularly important as a way to promote the green and digital transitions for all countries involved in the project (and all countries of the European Union).

The following part of the meeting consisted of the presentation of the preliminary results, conclusions and recommendations of the national desk analyses and the national focus groups/interviews. These results were presented by national experts. This part of the meeting was moderated by the lead research coordinator, Professor Dusan Mojic from the Faculty of Philosophy (University of Belgrade). Professor Mojic recalled the key concepts and processes at the heart of the analysis in this project – Just Transition, European Green Deal, Green Social Dialogue and collective bargaining in the context of the fast-moving energy transition.



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The results of the Spanish desk analysis and the focus groups were presented by Mr Lozano at the beginning of this part of the meeting. The desk analysis provided a comprehensive overview of the legal framework in Spain in relation to the above-mentioned concepts and processes within the tripartite dialogue, while the results of the focus groups offered deeper insights into the collective bargaining on the green transition in Spain, which is still in its early stages.

Professor Dusan Mojic next presented the preliminary results of the desk analysis and the qualitative study conducted in Serbia. A focus group with nine trade union leaders from Serbia and 21 personal interviews were conducted (trade union leaders, managers of public and private companies, representatives of employers' organisations and a representative of trade unions at European level). The main conclusion of the study conducted in Serbia is that the key concepts and processes of the project are little known and even less implemented in social dialogue.

The results from Portugal were presented by Dr Nuno Boavida from the University of Lisbon, NOVA. Dr Boavida pointed out the difficulties in conducting empirical research, as the key concepts and processes of collective bargaining in the context of the green transition in Portugal are still quite underdeveloped.

Mrs. Małgorzata Koziarek, project coordinator/analyst of the Institute of Public Affairs from Poland, summarised the main findings of the desk study and field research on the process of collective bargaining in relation to just transition and green social dialogue in Poland. The preliminary results indicate that these concepts are not well known among the main actors in the world of work and their implementation is still the exception rather than the rule.

Professor Lazar Jovevski from the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje presented the most important preliminary results of the desk analysis and the focus groups from North Macedonia. He strongly emphasised the importance of the legal aspects of the concepts and processes in question. Thus, his analysis of the legal status of public enterprises (in general) allowed for a clearer understanding of the specificities of this form of organisation in all countries involved in the project. In addition, Professor Jovevski, in his capacity as an advisor in the team of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of North Macedonia, will have the opportunity to make an important contribution to strengthening social dialogue in this EU candidate country.



After the presentation of the preliminary results of the national desk analyses and field studies, an open discussion was organised. In the light of the preliminary results, three “blocs” of countries involved in the project were recognised - two “blocs” representing the – EU countries and one “bloc” representing the EU candidate countries. Two countries belong to the first “bloc” (Spain and Portugal), which is characterised by the fact that key players in the world of work are at least partially aware of and implementing the concepts of just transition and green social dialogue. The second EU “bloc” refers to Poland (and presumably Greece). Although some progress has been made in this respect, these two countries lag behind the aforementioned states. Finally, Serbia and North Macedonia are characterised by the almost complete absence of social dialogue and collective bargaining in general, and there are practically no “green clauses” in these processes.

The meeting also discussed best practises and policy recommendations with relevant stakeholders at national and EU level. These recommendations were proposed by participants from all national research teams and will be part of the draft policy document. The thematic structure of the document has been defined based on the proposal of the CSIT Unión Profesional, which is leading this project. This document will include best practises and recommendations to improve collective bargaining in the field of environmental responsibility for all Member States of the European Union as well as for the candidate countries. The meeting ended with a summary of the main conclusions and an analysis of the next project activities.

