



# Consulting European social partners: Understanding how it works

Social Europe



European Commission

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# Consulting European social partners: Understanding how it works

**European Commission**

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion  
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# I. The European social partners' contribution to the EU integration process

## Introduction

Since the beginning of European integration, the European social partners have played an important and ever increasing role in the field of social policy. European social partners are consulted by the Commission prior to legislative proposals on social matters. As a result, the European social partners have in a number of cases influenced the shaping of European social policy legislation and contributed significantly to the definition of European social standards.

The Commission may also consult the European social partners when drawing up new proposals, for example in order to prepare an Impact Assessment.

The Lisbon Treaty further strengthened the role of the social partners at EU level. A significant breakthrough has been achieved with the introduction of Article 152 TFEU<sup>(1)</sup>, which now provides that the Union as a whole — and not only the Commission — is committed to promoting social dialogue. The same Article also institutionalised the Tripartite Social Summit for Growth and Employment. In addition, the new horizontal clause (Art. 9 TFEU) stipulates that the Union shall take into account the social dimension in defining and implementing its policies. Today, the role of European social dialogue is fully recognised across the EU and its institutions.

*'The Union recognises and promotes the role of social partners at its level, taking into account the diversity of national systems. It shall facilitate dialogue between the social partners, respecting their autonomy.'*

*The Tripartite Social Summit for Growth and Employment shall contribute to social dialogue.'*

Article 152 TFEU

*'In defining and implementing its policies and activities, the Union shall take into account requirements linked to the promotion of a high level of employment, the guarantee of adequate social protection, the fight against social exclusion, and a high level of education, training and protection of human health'*

Article 9 TFEU

(1) TFEU: Treaty on the functioning of the European Union

## The scope of this brochure

This brochure focuses on the consultation mechanisms and explains how the consultation of European social partners works. Three types of consultation need to be distinguished:

- **Consultations** relating to legislative proposals for social policy. As laid down in **Article 154 TFEU**, the Commission has the duty to consult European social partners prior to presenting any legislative proposal in the social field.
- **Consultation structures in support of EU policies.** The Commission has set up cross-industry and sectoral social dialogue committees which are consulted on its policies. In addition, social partners are involved in some committees specifically created to support the development of policies in particular areas.
- **Consultations in relation to Impact Assessments.** The Commission is committed to preparing Impact Assessments prior to any policy proposals. The guidelines on Impact Assessment provide for consultation of social partners where appropriate.

In addition, social partners — either at European or at national level — may take part in any **public consultation** on non-legislative initiatives (e.g. Green papers, White papers, Communications, Staff Working Documents etc.) launched by the Commission, which give all relevant stakeholders the opportunity to express their views.

Considering the complexity of consultation mechanisms and the increasing number of consultations, it is a major challenge for European social partners to contribute in a timely manner and develop qualitative expertise on the issues that concern them. Accordingly, the Commission may support the efforts of European social partners in strengthening their **administrative capacity**.

The focus of this brochure is on the work given to European social partners as a result of consultations launched by the Commission. However, it also addresses the role that national social partners can play in this context.

It should be noted that social partners are also represented in the **European Economic and Social Committee**. The opinions and the activities of this European advisory body are not covered by this brochure.



## II. Consultations under Article 154 TFEU

### 1. The legal basis

The formal consultation procedure is laid down in **Article 154 TFEU**. It is the result of a long political process. Indeed, the consultation dimension of European social dialogue was already present in the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 and the Rome Treaty in 1957. Following the Single European Act (1986), it was developed further in the European social partners' agreement on social policy in 1991, which led to the social protocol annexed to the Maastricht Treaty in 1993. The provisions were ultimately incorporated in the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997 (Articles 137 and 138) and have remained unchanged since then (Articles 154 and 155).

European social partners are not only consulted prior to the adoption of new EU initiatives; they are also consulted during the implementation phase of EU law, for instance when preparing **implementation reports**.

European social partners can also be consulted by the European Commission on the occasion of litigations brought before the European Court of Justice concerning the interpretation of social dialogue agreements implemented by means of Directives (known as **preliminary rulings**).



## 2. European social partners

Article 154 TFEU gives the European social partners the right to be consulted on any new European initiative relating to the policy fields as set out in Article 153 TFEU. Only the European organisations representing employers and workers at EU level, who are recognised as ‘European social partners’ can be consulted by the Commission. To this end, the Commission regularly updates its list of consulted organisations (of which there are currently 87) on the basis of representativeness studies carried out by Eurofound.

All European social partners — whether they are sectoral or cross-industry organisations — are on an equal footing. However, the Commission may limit the number of organisations which are consulted according to the specific nature of the topic, in order to collect only relevant contributions.

‘The Commission shall have the task of promoting the consultation of management and labour at Union level and shall take any relevant measure to facilitate their dialogue by ensuring balanced support for the parties.

To this end, before submitting proposals in the social policy field, the Commission shall consult management and labour on the possible direction of Union action.

If, after such consultation, the Commission considers Union action advisable, it shall consult management and labour on the content of the envisaged proposal. Management and labour shall forward to the Commission an opinion or, where appropriate, a recommendation.

On the occasion of the consultation referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3, management and labour may inform the Commission of their wish to initiate the process provided for in Article 155.

The duration of this process shall not exceed nine months, unless the management and labour concerned and the Commission decide jointly to extend it’.

*Article 154 TFEU*

### 3. The procedure

Article 154 TFEU provides for a formal **two-stage consultation procedure**:

1) In the first stage, the Commission consults the European social partners on the possible direction of a new legislative proposal in the social policy field. In this context, the Commission **notifies** to the European social partners **a first phase consultation document** setting out the framework of a possible initiative. The aim is to obtain the opinion of the European social partners on the need for such an initiative, its direction and the type of legislative instrument (Regulation, Directive or Decision). The Commission collects their individual or joint opinions within **a period of six weeks**.

- Do you consider it advisable to take an initiative in this area?
- Should this initiative be taken at Union level, if appropriate?
- If so, do you share the Commission's view as to how the Union should approach the problem, namely by initially encouraging Member States to take the necessary measures on a voluntary basis, or do you consider that a binding instrument is called for from the outset?

*Example of questions raised by the Commission during the first consultation phase*

2) After having collected the contributions from the European social partners, the Commission services summarise them in a **second-phase consultation document**, which is also notified to the European social partners. This time, the Commission indicates the possible scope and content of the envisaged legislative proposal.

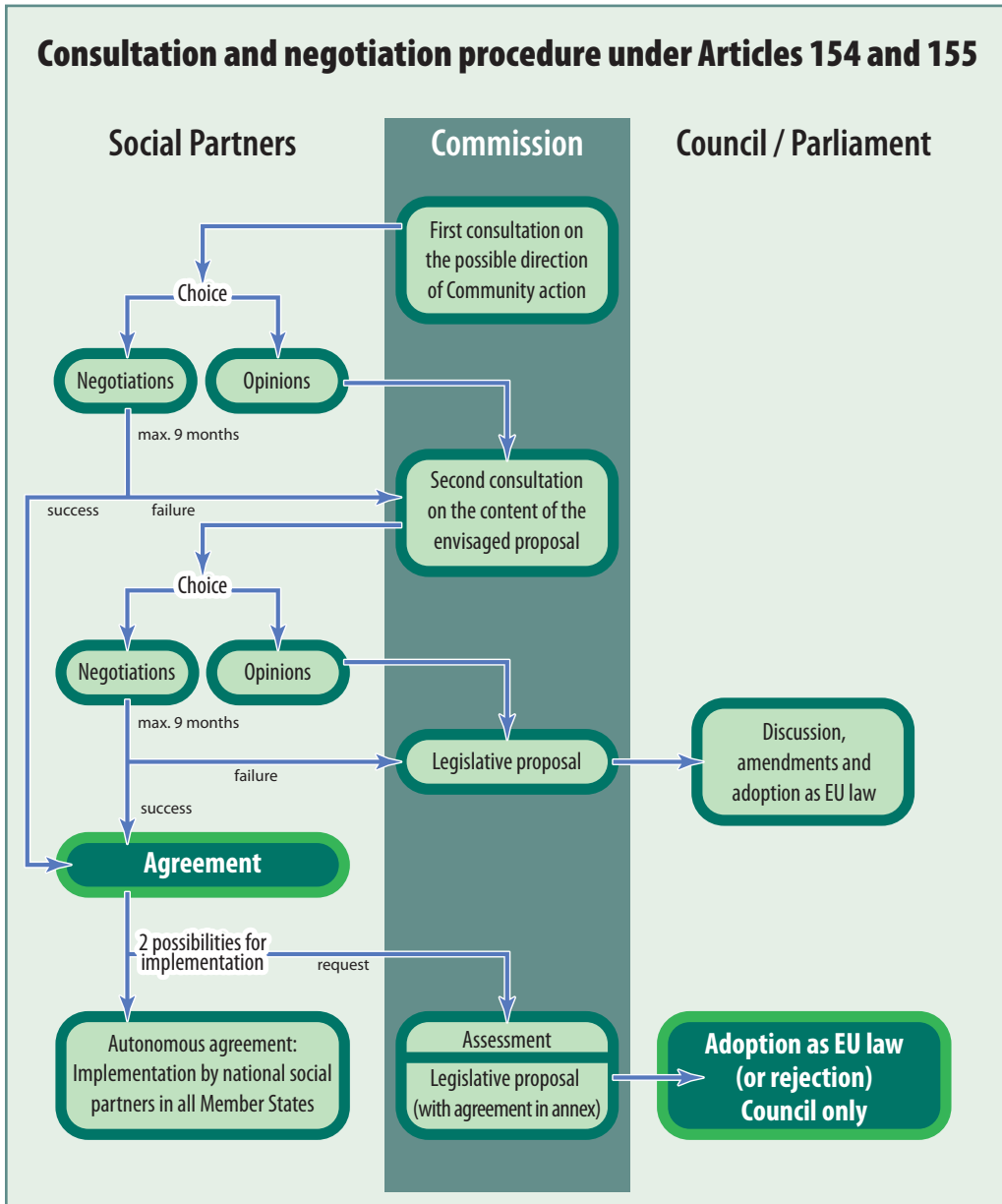
The consultation process enables the European social partners to directly influence the drafting of new legislative initiatives.

Social partners may decide to open **negotiations** and to deal with a specific issue through bipartite social dialogue at any stage during the two consultation phases. Consequently, the Commission initiative is suspended. However, if the European social partners do not come to a conclusion and the Commission considers that Union action is desirable, it will continue preparing its legislative proposal.

- The Commission invites the social partners to:
- forward an opinion or, where appropriate, a recommendation on the content of the envisaged regulatory and non regulatory initiatives;
  - inform the Commission of their readiness to start a negotiation process on the basis of the proposals described in this document

*Example of questions raised by the Commission during the second consultation phase*

## Consultation and negotiation procedure under Articles 154 and 155





## 4. The conditions

According to Article 154 TFEU, the Commission has the **duty** to consult European social partners only if the following three conditions are met:

1. 'Legislative proposal'

The formal consultation is limited to legislative proposals (i.e. Regulations, Directives, Decisions)

2. 'Social policy'

The formal consultation is limited to this policy area only (Title X of the TFEU)

3. 'Fields of activities'

EU legislative proposals may only be undertaken in the following fields as defined by Article 153 TFEU:

- a) workers' health and safety
- b) working conditions
- c) social security and social protection of workers
- d) protection of workers where their employment is terminated
- e) the information and consultation of workers
- f) representation and collective defence of the interests of workers and employers
- g) conditions of employment for third-country nationals residing in Union territory
- h) integration of persons excluded from the labour market
- i) equality between men and women with regard to labour market opportunities and treatment at work

*Prerequisites for launching a formal consultation under Article 154 TFEU*

## 5. The outcome

### *a) Influencing the EU decision-making process*

Together with European social legislation, European social dialogue is a major instrument for improving labour standards in the European Union and for contributing to the modernisation of labour markets. In this context, formal consultations play a key role in the regulatory processes of EU decision-making. Since 1995, the European social partners have been formally consulted by the Commission around 80 times. Their views have enabled the Commission to assess its various legislative options and to prepare its suggestions for the future.

In addition to the contributions received via the consultation process, the Commission takes into account the work of European social partners, in its legislative proposals for social policies, and in particular their outcomes, such as recommendations (e.g. codes of conduct, guidelines), declarations, joint opinions or tools (e.g. studies, handbooks, etc.).

Permanent feed-back from European social partners will help the Commission to identify the areas where an update or new provisions are needed in order to address the concerns of the social partners. For instance, guidance from European social partners could help the Commission to improve the balance between ensuring adequate protection of the workers' interests and minimising the burden on enterprises.

As examples, European social partners have had a considerable influence on the preparation of the following Commission proposals:

- Revamping the rules to protect EU workers from harmful electromagnetic fields;
- The new framework Directive on the establishment of the European Works Councils;
- The Directive implementing the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave;
- The recommendation on a smoke-free environment;

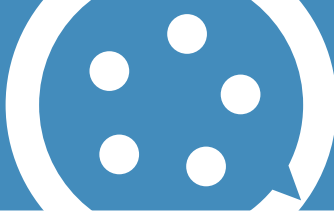
### *b) Entering into negotiations*

During the consultation process, the European social partners may inform the Commission of their intention to enter into contractual relations, including with a view to concluding agreements. The following table provides an overview of some recent formal consultations which have led to negotiations between European social partners and, as a consequence, to concrete outcomes (e.g. agreements implemented through Council Directives or autonomous agreements implemented by the national members of European social partner organisations).



### Overview of some recent formal consultations leading to negotiations

<i>Date</i>	<i>Consultations</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Negotiations</i>	<i>Sector</i>
<b>2002</b>	Stress at work	<b>2004</b>	Framework agreement on work-related stress	Cross-industry
<b>2004</b>	Carcinogens, mutagens and reprotoxic substances	<b>2006</b>	Agreement on workers' health protection through the proper handling and use of crystalline silica and products containing it	Multi-sectoral
<b>2005</b>	Violence at the workplace	<b>2007</b>	Framework agreement on harassment and violence at work	Cross-industry
		<b>2010</b>	Guidelines to tackle third-party violence and harassment related to work	Multi-sectoral
<b>2006</b>	Musculoskeletal disorders	<b>2006</b>	Framework agreement on the reduction of workers' exposure to the risk of work-related musculo-skeletal disorders	Agriculture
<b>2006</b>	Strengthening of maritime labour standards	<b>2009</b>	COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2009/13/EC of 16 February 2009 implementing the Agreement concluded by the European Community Shipowners' Associations (ECSA) and the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) on the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, and amending Directive 1999/63/EC	Maritime Transport
<b>2007</b>	Active inclusion of the people furthest from the labour market	<b>2010</b>	Framework agreement on inclusive labour markets	Cross-industry
<b>2007</b>	Blood-borne infections due to needle stick injuries	<b>2010</b>	COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2010/32/EU of 10 May 2010 implementing the Framework Agreement on prevention from sharps injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector concluded by HOSPEEM and EPSU	Hospitals



# III. Consultation structures in support of EU policies

## 1. Social Dialogue Committees

### *1) Cross-industry Social Dialogue: The Social Dialogue Committee*

The Social Dialogue Committee (SDC), which was set up in 1992, is the main body for **bipartite** autonomous **cross-industry** social dialogue at European level. It meets 3-4 times a year to discuss the views of social partners on various topics. It adopts texts negotiated by both parties and identifies future initiatives. The SDC currently comprises 64 members (32 employers, 32 workers) from either European secretariats or national organisations. While the Social Dialogue Committee is first and foremost the main body for autonomous social dialogue, its meetings also offer an opportunity for the information and consultation of European social partners on some of the Union's policy orientations, for example on flexicurity.

### *2) The European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees*

European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees are the fora where representatives from European social partners can discuss all matters related to their specific sectoral activities. They are also the instrument for consultations, autonomous social dialogue, joint actions or negotiations on issues of common interest, thereby directly contributing to the shaping of EU standards, legislation and policies. The work of the 40 sectoral Committees is coordinated by the Liaison Forum. In line with the 1998 Commission Decision setting up these committees, the Commission consults the European social partners on the orientations of policies which directly concern their sector and which may have employment and social implications.

## 2. Tripartite Social Summit

The Tripartite Social Summit, which meets at least once a year, before the spring European Council, institutionalises the Informal Summits held since December 2000. It consists of the Council Presidency and the two subsequent Presidencies, the Commission and the social partners, represented at the highest level. Its objective is to ensure the effective participation of the social partners in implementing the EU's economic and social policies.



## Overview of Social Dialogue Committees

Sectors	European social partners	
	Employees	Employers
Cross-Industry	ETUC	BusinessEurope, UEAPME, CEEP
Agriculture	EFFAT	GEOPA/COPA
Audiovisual	EURO-MEI, EFJ, FIA, FIM	EBU, ACT, AER, CEPI, FIAPF
Banking	UNI europa	EBF-BCESA, ESBG,EACB
Catering	EFFAT	FERCO
Chemical Industry	EMCEF	ECEG
Central Government Administrations	TUNED (EPSU+CESI)	EUPAE
Civil Aviation	ECA, ETF	ACI-Europe, AEA, CANSO, ERA, IACA, IAHA
Commerce	UNI europa	EuroCommerce
Construction	EFBWW	FIEC
Education	ETUCE	EFEE
Electricity	EPSU, EMCEF	Eurelectric
Extractive Industries	EMCEF	APEP, EURACOAL, UEPG, IMA, Euromines
Footwear	ETUF: TCL	CEC
Furniture	EFBWW	UEA, EFIC
Gas	EMCEF, EPSU	EUROGAS
Horeca	EFFAT	Hotrec
Hospitals and Healthcare	EPSU	HOSPEEM
Industrial Cleaning	UNI europa	EFCl
Inland Waterways	ETF	EBU, ESO
Insurance	UNI europa	CEA, BIPAR, AMICE
Live Performance	EAEA	Pearle
Local and Regional Governments	EPSU	CEMR
Maritime Transport	ETF	ECSA
Metal	EMF	CEEMET
Paper Industry	EMCEF	CEPI
Personal Services	UNI europa	Coiffure EU
Postal Services	UNI europa	PostEurop
Private Security	UNI europa	CoESS
Professional Football	FIFPro	EPFL, ECA
Railways	ETF	CER, EIM
Road Transport	ETF	IRU
Sea Fisheries	ETF	Europêche, COGECA
Shipbuilding	EMF	CESA
Steel	EMF	Eurofer
Sugar	EFFAT	CEFS
Tanning and Leather	ETUF:TCL	COTANCE
Telecommunications	UNI europa	ETNO
Temporary Agency Work	UNI europa	Eurociett
Textile and Clothing	ETUF:TCL	Euratex
Woodworking	EFBWW	CEI-Bois

This list shows the current state of play — it will be regularly updated on the Commission's website <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=522&langId=en>.



### 3. Advisory Committees

Several EU policies are backed by the establishment of Advisory Committees. These are laid down either by Treaty provisions or by legislative acts. Although they vary considerably in terms of their functions, some Advisory Committees have a **tripartite structure** and bring together representatives from the Member States and social partners appointed at national level. In this way, European social partners are able to play an informal coordination role.

Examples of Advisory Committees of the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion:

- The European Social Fund Committee (ESF)
- The Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health at Work (ACSHH)
- The Scientific Committee on Occupational Exposure (SCOEL)
- The Advisory Committee on Freedom of Movement for Workers
- The Advisory Committee on Social Security for Migrant Workers

### 4. Other structures

European social partners may be invited to participate on an ad hoc basis in meetings of permanent structures for concertation between EU institutions and Member States, such as the Employment Committee (EMCO) and the Social Protection Committee (SPC). In addition, a specific dialogue on macroeconomic issues takes place periodically, involving the social partners, the Commission and economic and leading financial bodies in the EU.

### 5. The European Agencies

European social partners are represented on the Governing Boards of the following European agencies and therefore contribute directly to the governance of the following bodies:

- 1) **Eurofound** (the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, (Dublin, Ireland)
- 2) **EU-OSHA** (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work); (Bilbao, Spain)
- 3) **CEDEFOP** (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) (Thessaloniki, Greece)



## IV. Contributions to Impact Assessments

Impact Assessment (IA) is a process designed to structure and support the development of EU policies.

It identifies and assesses the issue at stake and the objectives pursued.

It identifies the main options for achieving the objective and analyses their likely impacts in the economic, environmental and social fields.

It outlines the advantages and disadvantages of each option and examines possible synergies and trade-offs.

Before the Commission proposes new initiatives, it assesses their potential economic, social and environmental consequences. To that end, the Commission has rolled out a comprehensive Impact Assessment system based on an integrated approach, which analyses both benefits and costs. Such Impact Assessments are carried out for all legislative and non-legislative initiatives which define future policies.

**The views and inputs of European social partners** can be a key element for the Commission's Impact Assessment process. Information on upcoming Impact Assessments is available on the Commission's website. The Commission's **Impact Assessment Guidelines** contain standards for consulting European social partners. They point out that consultation must comply with the Commission's general principles and minimum standards for consultation (e.g. regarding minimum response times, sufficient publicity and outreach to all relevant target groups, or the need to provide feedback on the outcomes of the consultation). They also highlight the obligation to consult European sectoral social dialogue committees in cases where the Commission initiative could be expected to have social implications for the sector(s) concerned.

Consultation of **European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees** is complementary to other forms of consultation, in particular public consultations which are launched prior to the preparation of Impact Assessment. A possible joint position of the European social partners can therefore provide a strong and representative indication of realistic policies and their impacts and implementation, which should be taken into account in the Impact Assessment. European social partners are particularly well placed to provide detailed evidence and expertise for their sector, including data and other technical input, thereby contributing to the quality of both the Impact Assessment and decision-making.

When planning the **Impact Assessment** work, the Commission departments in charge coordinate the organisation of consultations with sectoral social dialogue committees in response to their interests, in close cooperation with the Social Dialogue and Industrial Relations Unit of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. It is important that the results of consultations with Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees should be clearly summarised in the draft Impact Assessment report.

### Tips for European social partners:

The following practical proposals could help the European social partners with Impact Assessment:

- When responding to public consultations, identify yourself clearly as a recognised European social partner and/or representative of a European social dialogue committee.
- Based on the Commission's Impact Assessment planning and related roadmaps, inform the Commission services in charge of the Impact Assessment, and the Social Dialogue and Industrial Relations Unit of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, as early as possible that you wish to be consulted in the context of the Impact Assessment.
- When participating in consultations, remember that Impact Assessments are an aid to political decision-making, not a substitute for it, and concentrate your inputs on technical aspects in line with the Commission's Impact Assessment Guidelines.



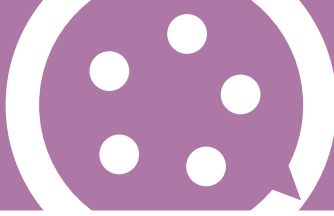
## V. Additional useful information

### Publications

- **Commission staff working document on the functioning and potential of European sectoral social dialogue** SEC(2010) 964final, 22.7.2010
- **Commission Communication: Partnership for change in an enlarged Europe — Enhancing the contribution of European social dialogue** COM(2004) 557final, 12.8.2004
- **Council Decision 2003/174/CE of 6 March 2003 establishing a Tripartite Social Summit for Growth and Employment** (2003/174/EC); OJ L 70, 14.03.2003, p.31
- **Commission Communication:**
  - **The European social dialogue, a force for innovation and change**
  - **Proposal for a Council Decision establishing a Tripartite Social Summit for Growth and Employment**  
COM(2002) 341final, 26.6.2002
- **Commission Communication:**
  - **Adapting and promoting the social dialogue at Community level**
  - **Draft Council Decision amending Decision 70/532/EEC setting up the Standing Committee on Employment in the European Communities**  
COM(1998)322final, 20.05.1998
- **Commission Decision of 20 May 1998 on the establishment of Sectoral Dialogue Committees promoting the Dialogue between the social partners at European level** C(1998)2334; OJ L 225, 12.08.1998, p.27

### Links

- **General link** related to European Social Dialogue: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=329&langId=en>
- Consultation documents and covering letters can be downloaded in English, French and German on the **Document Database of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion**. This database is intended to make available consultation documents relating to European Union employment, social affairs and inclusion policies: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/keyDocuments.jsp>
- Access to past and ongoing related **public consultations** is available online under: [http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/consultations/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/consultations/index_en.htm)
- The list of ongoing and upcoming **Impact Assessments** is published by the Commission, together with more detailed roadmaps that outline the related Impact Assessments, online under: [http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned\\_ia/roadmaps\\_2011\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned_ia/roadmaps_2011_en.htm)
- Impact Assessment **guidelines** can be found under: [http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/commission\\_guidelines/commission\\_guidelines\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/commission_guidelines/commission_guidelines_en.htm)



## European social partner organisations consulted under Article 154 (TFEU)

### 1. General cross-industry organisations

- BusinessEurope
- European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation and of Enterprises of General Economic Interest (CEEP)
- European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

### 2. Cross-industry organisations representing certain categories of workers or undertakings

- Eurocadres
- European Association of Craft and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (UEAPME)
- European Confederation of Executives and Managerial Staff (CEC)

### 3. Specific organisations

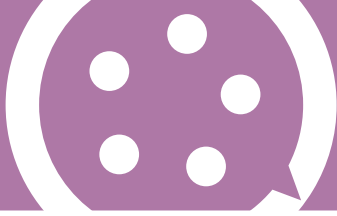
- Eurochambres

### 4. Sectoral organisations representing employers

- Association of Commercial Television in Europe (ACT)
- Airports Council International — Europe (ACI-Europe)
- Association of European Airlines (AEA)
- Association of European Professional Football Leagues (EPFL)
- Association of European Public Postal Operators (PostEurop)
- Association of European Radios (AER)
- Association of Mutual Insurers and Insurance Cooperatives in Europe (AMICE)
- Association of National Organisations of Fishing Enterprises in the EU (EUROPECHE)
- Banking Committee for European Social Affairs (EBF-BCESA)
- Civil Air Navigation Services Association (CANSO)
- Coiffure EU
- Committee of Agricultural Organisations in the European Union (COPA)
- Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER)
- Community of European Shipyards' Associations (CESA)
- Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI)
- Confederation of National Associations of Tanners and Dressers of the European Community (COTANCE)
- Council of European Employers of the Metal, Engineering and Technology-Based Industries (CEEMET)
- Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)
- Employers' Group of the Committee of Agricultural Organisations in the European Union (GEOPA)
- Euracoal
- Euromines



- European Aggregates Association (UEPG)
- European Apparel and Textile Organisation (EURATEX)
- European Association of Cooperative Banks (EACB)
- European Association of Potash Producers (APEP)
- European Barge Union (EBU)
- European Broadcasting Union (EBU)
- European Chemical Employers Group (ECEG)
- European Club Association (ECA)
- European Community Shipowners Association (ECSA)
- European Committee of Sugar Manufacturers (CEFS)
- European Confederation of the Footwear Industry (CEC)
- European Confederation of Iron and Steel Industries (Eurofer)
- European Confederation of Private Employment Agencies (Eurociett)
- European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois)
- European Construction Industry Federation (FIEC)
- European Coordination of Independent Producers (CEPI)
- European Federation of Cleaning Industries (EFCI)
- European Federation of Contract Catering Organisations (FERCO)
- European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE)
- European Federation of National Insurance Associations (CEA)
- European Federation of Security Services (CoESS)
- European Furniture Manufacturers' Federation (UEA)
- European Furniture Industries' Confederation (EFIC)
- European Hospital and Healthcare Employers' Association (HOSPEEM)
- European Industrial Minerals Association (IMA)
- European Public Administrations Employers (EUPAE)
- European Rail Infrastructure Managers (EIM)
- European Regions Airline Association (ERA)
- European Savings Banks Group (ESBG)
- European Skippers' Organisation (ESO)
- European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association (ETNO)
- European Union of the Natural Gas Industry (EUROGAS)
- General Committee for Agricultural Cooperation in the European Union (COGECA)
- Hotels, Restaurants and Cafés in Europe (HOTREC)
- International Air Carrier Association (IACA)
- International Aviation Handlers' Association (IAHA)
- International Federation of Film Producers' Associations (FIAPF)
- International Federation of Insurance Intermediaries (BIPAR)
- International Road Transport Union (IRU)
- Performing Arts Employers' Associations League Europe (PEARLE)
- Retail, Wholesale and International Trade Representation to the EU (EuroCommerce)
- Union of the Electricity Industry (EURELECTRIC)



### ***5. Sectoral European trade union organisations***

- European Arts and Entertainment Alliance (EAEA)
- European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions (CESI)
- European Cockpit Association (ECA)
- European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW)
- European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)
- European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)
- European Federation of Trade Unions in the Food, Agriculture and Tourism Sectors and Allied Branches (EFFAT)
- European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF)
- European Mine, Chemical and Energy Workers' Federation (EMCEF)
- European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE)
- European Trade Union Federation: Textiles, Clothing and Leather (ETUF:TCL)
- European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)
- International Federation of Actors (FIA)
- International Federation of Musicians (IFM)
- International Federation of Professional Footballers' Associations — Division Europe (FIFPro)
- Union Network International — Europe (UNI europa)
- Union Network International — Media and Entertainment International — Europe (EUROMEI)





European Commission

**Consulting European social partners: Understanding how it works**

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Social partners play a vital role in shaping European social policy and the European Commission consults them extensively. This brochure gives an overview of the social partners' contribution to EU integration before setting out how this consultation works. It looks at consultations related to legislative proposals and those aimed at supporting EU policies. In addition, it addresses the topic of Impact Assessment. Lists of publications, websites and social partner organisations are also provided.

The brochure is available in English, French and German.



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