



Decent Work and Tripartite Dialogue





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GUNN MARIT HELGESEN

Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS)

Norway and the Nordic countries are characterised by small open economies, a well-developed welfare state and organized labor relations. These are the main characteristics of “the Nordic model”. The social model has at times faced criticism: it has been argued that it is characterized by large public sectors, high taxes and a rigid labor market due to strong trade unions, as well as collective agreements and regulations. In recent years, the model has received positive global attention. At a time when most European countries have faced financial crisis, Norway and the Nordic countries have shown good results in terms of growth, employment, gender equality, competitiveness, living standards and social equality compared to other countries. The ability to combine efficiency, growth and equality has stimulated new thinking and debate in our society.

“The Nordic model” does, however, face a number of new challenges. External changes as a result of financial crises, increased global competition, climate changes, migration and European integration, will interact with internal changes related to the aging and diversification of the population, as well as urbanization, and rising the expectations for health, education and welfare. A core question is whether we will be able to meet these challenges by renewing institutions and instruments, without compromising the objectives, which are fair distribution of resources, balanced growth, full employment and the political support for “the Nordic model”.

In the coming years the local government sector in Norway and in other European countries will experience increased competition for manpower. At the same time, the services will need to be adapted to citizens’ increasing demands and needs. Young workers have different expectations and requirements of their employer. Many want greater

freedom and mobility. Young people want flexibility, and want to be seen and recognised for their efforts. They do not want to work in traditional hierarchies, but across sectors and in networks.

We, in local government sector, must work strategically and interact with others such as private businesses, voluntary organisations, social entrepreneurs, universities and, of course, social partners not only in Norway but internationally. We have to share our best practices, learn from each other, and inspire each other in order to improve cooperation between employers’ organisations, trade unions and public authorities, supporting fair and sustainable economic and social development.

Under the Global Fund for Decent Work and Tripartite Dialogue we have already reached some results. You can read about them in this publication. The work we have started must be continued. A real dialogue is only established when you have trust among the partners. If social dialogue is to remain successful, it must be both diligently nurtured when it is young and carefully maintained when it is mature.



*Gunn Marit Helgesen
President*

METTE NORD

Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees

The EEA- Norway Grant Fund is an initiative seeking to reduce the gap between rich and poor countries, by improving social and economic conditions in Central and Eastern Europe. In Norway, we have learned that strong organisations require close dialogue and cooperation between the partners in the labour market and the Government. The financial crises is leaving many workplaces, employees and families across these countries in hardship, making the issues of this programme even more critical.

NUMGE (Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees) is the largest trade union in the municipal sector and a member of the Confederation of Trade Unions (LO). Building our organisation gives us a strong voice when it comes to our primary role of securing wages and improving working conditions for all employees. Organisation building is an important part of strengthening our institutions and our democracy and approximately 80 per cent of employees in the public sector are members of a trade union.

The Norwegian Model of cooperation at national level has long traditions and has proven to be a success for us. Over the last few years, the National Ministry in charge of local government has collaborated with KS and the four largest national trade unions to support programs in the municipalities, focusing specifically on quality of services, decent work and innovation. These programs also promoted social dialogue – a constructive cooperation between politicians, administrative leaders and trade unions to strengthen the advantages, and to further develop

a culture of cooperation locally. We believe that solving problems must be done collectively, as we share common goals in creating jobs and in securing good working conditions. We believe this is the way to provide high quality public services to our citizens. The best possible job is done when we do it together.

As President of NUMGE, I am proud of all the good work and the positive experiences that are reported from the different projects after only two years. We know that building trust, a collaborative culture and actually experiencing the advantages takes time, so I urge us all to keep up the good work. In the next phase of EEA-funding, I hope we are able to continue cooperating in projects under the headline of "Decent Work - Tripartite Dialogue".



*Mette Nord
President*

THE DECENT WORK AND TRIPARTITE DIALOGUE PROJECTS

The Global Fund for Decent Work and Tripartite Dialogue was launched in 2011. Partners in the labour market in the 12 beneficiary EU countries were invited to apply for project funds to strengthen cooperation between representatives of employers, workers and government. Partnership with Norwegian counterparts was possible, but not mandatory. The programme was financed through the Norway Grants scheme, to promote the decent work agenda and foster tripartite dialogue. The objective was that by improving the tripartite dialogue, the social partners in each country would better contribute to a more sustainable economic and social development.

WHAT IS **TRIPARTITE DIALOGUE?**

Tripartite dialogue is the interaction of government, employers and workers (through their representatives) as equal and independent partners to seek solutions to issues of common concern

(Annual Report EEA Grants 2013-2014)

WHAT IS **DECENT WORK ?**

Decent work is about equal access to employment without discrimination, receiving a living wage, security in the workplace, social protection, when, for example, ill or pregnant, and the freedom to assemble and organize.

Decent work is achieved through the implementation of four strategic objectives: Creating jobs, guaranteeing rights at work, extending social protection, and, promoting social dialogue with gender equality as a crosscutting objective.

(Annual Report EEA Grants 2013-2014)

Structural challenges

Dialogue and interaction between the government, employers, workers and their representatives vary between countries and sectors. The importance of a high quality and efficient public sector is crucial, but in many countries, there is little tradition for effective tripartite dialogue in the public sector. The situation in the local government sector is often even more complicated as municipalities are often not formally established as employers, and local government associations do not always take part in national tripartite negotiations.

Project themes

The project promoters in the different countries selected different themes for their projects, themes that were related to specific challenges in the country. Four of the projects described in this publication chose to demonstrate the importance of the link between decent work and tripartite dialogue by focusing on threats and violence at the work place, so called third party violence (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania). Three projects chose a more structural and organizational theme, focusing on mechanisms to strengthen tripartite dialogue (Lithuania, Poland, Romania).

Close cooperation between KS and NUMGE

- The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities, KS, and The Norwegian Union of General and Municipal Employees, NUMGE, have worked closely together at the national level for many years as the biggest representatives of employers and workers in the public and the municipal sector in Norway. Through the Decent Work and Tripartite projects, KS and NUMGE brought the cooperation to an international level, by jointly cooperating with partners in altogether 7 projects in 6 beneficiary countries with the objective to improve working life through dialogue between employers, workers, and government.
- The different project partners in the 6 different countries developed their own themes and projects.
- KS has been the main project partner for 5 projects in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland and Romania.

- NUMGE has been the main project partner in 2 projects in Estonia and Lithuania.
- However, both KS and NUMGE have been involved in all the 7 projects, thus showing the bilateral dialogue between employers and workers in practice.
- KS and NUMGE have contributed with 50% of the requested co-financing for the projects, and KS and NUMGE have shared this co-financing for all the 7 projects.

Other Norwegian partners

Apart from the cooperation between KS and NUMGE, an agreement was signed with FaFo, a Norwegian research institute whose aim is to develop knowledge about living conditions, participation, democracy and development. Informal agreements were also made with the two ministries with authority on social dialogue; the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (AD) and the then, Ministry of Administration and Consumer Affairs (FAD). Our partners in the beneficiary states were encouraged to establish similar contacts.

Throughout the projects we have also had a constructive cooperation with the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority, the National Institute for Occupational Health as well as with Norwegian municipalities.

The project participants have enjoyed the field visits to Norwegian municipalities, meeting the practitioners for hands on stories and examples. We are grateful to the Norwegian municipalities Lunner, Steinkjer, Fredrikstad and Øvre Eiker. They willingly shared their experience on policies, systems and methods of cooperation.

Sustainable cooperation

At the international level, KS, NUMGE and the 7 projects have had regular contact with the Committee of European Municipalities and Regions, CEMR, and the European Federation of Public Service Unions, EPSU and have taken part in several of their meetings in Brussels. The CEMR-EPSU Social Dialogue Committee meetings represent an important arena for sustainable cooperation between employers' and workers' organisations in the European local government sector.

Mutual learning

Exchange of experience and knowledge has been at the centre of the cooperation, both between Norwegian partners and partners in beneficiary countries, but also between participating countries.

KS and NUMGE are impressed by our project partners, the employers and the trade unions, and their willingness to try out new arenas and new forms of cooperation. For some, the project was the first step to realize that they do have common interests and to discuss new initiatives. Norway has a strong tradition on tripartite consultations, bringing together workers, employers and government in formulating and negotiating labour standards and policies. However, as project partners we were challenged to reflect on own traditions and experiences, well aware that no model is perfect and that no model fits all.

PROJECTS AND COUNTRIES 2013-2014:

Country	Project title	Focus (excerpts)	Project promoter	Project partner(s)	Norwegian partner	Total budget €
Czech Republic	Prevention of third party violence in Prague	Awareness rising and capacity building on challenges regarding social dialogue, decent work and threats and violence	Union of Employers' Associations, Centre of Development Activities	Trade Union of Health Services, Social Care of the Czech Republic	Norwegian Association of local and regional Authorities	219.972
Estonia	Social dialogue to prevent third party violence	Pilot projects on how to prevent threats and violence in the workplace	Trade Union of the State and Self-governed Institutions Workers	Association of Estonian Cities, Association of Estonian Municipalities	Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees	154.720
Hungary	Prevention of third party violence at local level	Development of tripartite dialogue and decent working conditions in municipalities	The Hungarian Association for Municipal and Regions	The Trade Union of Public Servants and Municipal Employees	Norwegian Association of local and regional Authorities	259.400
Lithuania	Decent Work for Social Workers at Municipal Level	Awareness-raising on challenges regarding decent work and threats and violence for social workers	Lithuanian Trade Union of State, Budget and Public Service Employees	Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania	Norwegian Association of local and regional Authorities	85.723
Lithuania	Social dialogue at the grass-roots municipal level	Social dialogue as a method for solving challenges of mutual interest	National Association of Officers' Trade Unions of Lithuania	The municipalities Kiskis, Ukmerge and Ignalia, Business Employers Association in Lithuania	Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees	88.887
Poland	Social Dialogue in Municipal Sector and Enterprises	Improved working environment, communication and relations between municipal leaders and workers	Association of Polish Cities		Norwegian Association of local and regional Authorities	439.959
Romania	Enhancing Social Dialogue for Civil Servants	Improving social dialogue and bipartite dialogue structures and practices	The National Agency for Civil Servants	The Romanian Municipalities Association	Norwegian Association of local and regional Authorities	351.778



CZECH REPUBLIC

Project information

Title: Prevention of third party violence in Prague

Project promoter: Union of Employers' Associations, Centre of Development Activities

Project partner: Trade Union of Health Services and Social Care of the Czech Republic

Norwegian partner: Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities

Total project budget: Euro 219.972

Focus: Awareness-raising and capacity-building about the challenges regarding social dialogue, decent work, and threats and violence from clients to workers in social and health facilities

Activities: training seminars for social and health workers, national conference, elaboration of good practices, establishing of prevention teams, study tours.

Status and challenges

- The concept of tripartite dialogue needs to be demystified. The roles and responsibilities of the three parties need to be clearly defined and agreed by all the three parties.
- Tripartite dialogue is a basis for decent work, including reduction of threats and violence at the work place.
- Tripartite dialogue is especially important during the present social and financial crisis, when both

decent services for the population and decent work for the workers are at stake.

Project results:

We looked for a win-win topic

Ms. Radka Soukupová, Project Manager, Chair of Social Committee of Czech Union of Towns and Municipalities



When it became possible to obtain resources from the Global Fund for Decent Work and Tripartite Dialogue, we realized that this was an exceptional opportunity to develop social dialogue. We also realized that we had to find a topic where representatives of trade unions and employers would have a common goal. The prevention of threats and violence at the work place seemed to be an ideal theme. Workplace violence in the health and social facilities in the Czech Republic is growing. Currently the violence does not only take verbal forms, but there are more and more physical assaults against both employees and employers. This project has led to a common search for preventive procedures and to shared mutual learning.

COUNTRY FACTS 2013

	Czech Republic	EU -28
GDP per capita	20.700	25.500
Economic growth	-0.9	0.1
Unemployment rate	7.0	10.8
Youth unemployment rate	18.9	23.4
Gender pay gap	22.0	16.4
At-risk-of-poverty-rate	9.6	17.0





Minister of Health, Norwegian Ambassador and Project Partners at Final Project Conference in Prague

Aggression should not be met with aggression

Mr. Svatopluk Němeček, Minister of Health

This is an important project. It is evident that the rate of violence against workers in the social and health-care sector continues to grow. It is necessary to teach the workers not to respond to aggression with aggression. Training employees on how to prevent violence from patients, clients or their family members is very necessary.

Congratulations on the results

Ms. Siri Ellen Sletner, Norwegian Ambassador

This project has contributed to a better social dialogue and a safer working environment at health and social institutions. This has been achieved through cooperation with Norwegian partners, training courses and an international conference. I would like to congratulate you on the results.

Contribution to development of social dialogue

Mr. Jiří Horecký, President of the Czech Union of Employers' Associations

The issue of decent work and its systematic approach is still missing in the Czech Republic. The subject covers a wide range of important aspects for employees and employers: e.g. mutual communication, the right to fair remuneration, safety and flexibility, appropriate working conditions, etc. The reason for the increasing violence in the workplace is probably the workload of staff, due to pressure on public budgets. Social dialogue in the field of social and health services is at a relatively good level, thanks to earlier projects aimed at promoting social dialogue. The key step is to identify common objectives for both parties and subsequently bipartite methods, possibilities and conditions for their realization. The present project definitely contributed to the development of social dialogue.

Employers and employees think violence is normal

Ms. Ivana Břeňková, Vice-president of the Trade Union for the Social and Health Sector

Threats and violence are important issues at the workplace. The staff are under pressure from the employer and from clients. The employer is under pressure due to lack of funding. In social and health care, threats and violence are a reality, and most employers and employees think that the violence are normal, a part of these professions. From our Norwegian partner, I learnt that a close cooperation between the social partners at the workplace is possible.

Social dialogue can help resolve disputes

Mr. Pavel Knebl, Social Dialogue Department of Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

Aggression is growing throughout the society, workers are afraid of losing their jobs, deepening social differences are evident even in schools. Social dialogue can help resolve disputes between the social partners.

ESTONIA

Project information

Title: Social Dialogue to prevent third party violence
Project promoter: Trade Union of the State and Self-governed Institutions' Workers.

Project partners: Association of Estonian Cities and Association of Estonian Municipalities

Norwegian partner: Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees.

Total project budget: € 154.720

Focus: Three municipalities/institutions have developed pilots on how to prevent, detect and handle threats and violence in the workplace. Social and tripartite dialogue has been practiced in seminars and meetings during the project period.

Activities: Seminars with sharing and learning between employees, administrative leaders and local politicians on facts, prevention and responsibilities regarding how to protect and improve working conditions in the workplace. Training staff in methods and hands-on techniques. Field visits.

Status and challenges

- The organizational degree among employees in Estonia is very weak, approximately 10 per cent in the public sector are members of a trade union.
- The Associations of Cities and The Association of Municipalities have limited responsibilities as

employers and counterparts to trade unions.

- There is no long tradition for cooperation and tripartite dialogue, but the social partners are very willing.
- It may be easier to broaden contact and build trust amongst the partners through more cooperation in development activities locally using the methods of social dialogue.

Project results:

Mr. Kalle Liivamägi, president of ROTAL:

Through this project we have put threats and violence as a serious issue on the agenda. I am very pleased that ROTAL could sign a memorandum of understanding with The Association of Cities and The Association of Municipalities to prevent and mitigate threats and violence in the workplace. The leaflet focusing on threats and violence with good information on how to cope with it, and where to get help, was developed through social dialogue during the pilot project. The experience from the pilot projects should be disseminated to all municipalities. This project is a very good start, but there are more issues we as partner organizations should cooperate on.

COUNTRY FACTS 2013

	Estonia	EU -28
GDP per capita	18.200	25.500
Economic Growth	0.8	0.1
Unemployment rate	8.6	10.8
Youth unemployment	18.7	23.4
Gender gap pay	30.0	16.4
At-risk-of-poverty rate (2012)	17.5	17.0



These views were shared by Mrs Anne Läns, project partner and counsellor in Association of Estonian Cities who emphasised that the projects on social dialogue gave a very positive experience in terms of dialogue and active involvement by participants at the workshops, but also the constructive cooperation with the employees organization ROTAL. It was very useful to visit Lunner in Norway, and Mrs Läns underlined that they may have a lot to learn about cooperation between key local partners in general, but also about how to develop services to our citizens.



Putting threats and violence on the agenda

Tallinn Centre for Children at Risk takes care of 48 boys and girls aged 10 to 17. Over a period of 10 months the children are given training and education in safe surroundings, with close and good supervision. Eight pedagogues work together with four psychologists focusing on the child and his or her family.

Working to reduce threats and violence in the context of this program meant a lot to the climate between the colleagues at the centre. Taking part in seminars boosted the interest and focus on the different types of violence they were exposed to. By setting threats and violence in the workplace on the agenda, and by sharing information from the seminars, they improved their skills on different matters in the daily life of the Children's Centre.



Signing of Agreement by Jüri Võigemast Association of Estonian Cities, Kalle Liivamägi ROTAL, Ott Kasuri Association of Estonian Municipalities.

Tatiana Romanova and Priit Siig underlined that they have used these opportunities to involve all colleagues in the social dialogue. Dialogue and discussions have improved and trust has been built amongst the colleagues, but they are fully aware that there is no quick fix in any kind of work.

A milestone reached through an important agreement

On September 25th the partners in Estonia passed a milestone signing a memorandum of understanding on the need of measures for prevention and mitigation of third party violence in the workplace.

The memorandum was signed by ROTAL, the Trade Union of State and Self-governed Institution workers, The Association of Estonian cities and the Association of Estonian Municipalities. By signing

this agreement, the social partners agree upon the fact that there is insufficient awareness in society of the very existence and level of third party violence in the workplace.

Furthermore they agree upon the importance and necessity in implementing measures for prevention of third party violence in workplaces facing this kind of challenge. The signatory social partners are unanimous in saying that recognition, assessment, and tackling violence requires involvement from all relevant social partners. Through openness, acceptance and a broad dialogue they are able to establish good routines and thereby ensure the safety of the employees, improve the service quality to the clients and finally improve the allocation of human and fiscal resources.

HUNGARY

Project information

Project title: Prevention of Third-Party Violence at the Local Level

Focus: Development of tripartite dialogue and decent working conditions in Hungarian municipalities.

Exchange of knowledge and experience with Norwegian partners.

Project promoter: The Hungarian Association for Municipalities and Regions -TÖÖSZ

Project partners: The Trade Union of Public Servants and Municipal Employees -MKKSZ

Norwegian partner: Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities-KS

Project budget: Euro 259 400

Key activities: National study on third party violence, elaboration of guidelines, training seminars for employers and employees in municipalities and counties, national conferences.

Status and challenges

- The most important topics of tripartite negotiations are: salary, taxes, pensions, social benefits and questions of employment. Issues important for local government, such as security at the workplaces and health protection, are rarely dealt with.
- Healthy and secure workplaces should be legally regulated. This would put issues such as training

on prevention, the treatment of specific cases and the support of the victims on the agenda of tripartite dialogue. The project focus on the prevention of, and protection against client-based violence contributed to this process.

- The study performed as part of the project showed that client-based violence is a serious threat for local governments. The level of threat is the highest in the poorest Northern- North-East parts of Hungary and the richest Mid-Hungarian region. Social affairs, taxation, and construction are the most exposed areas.

Project results:



Mrs Katalin Sabján, Project Manager

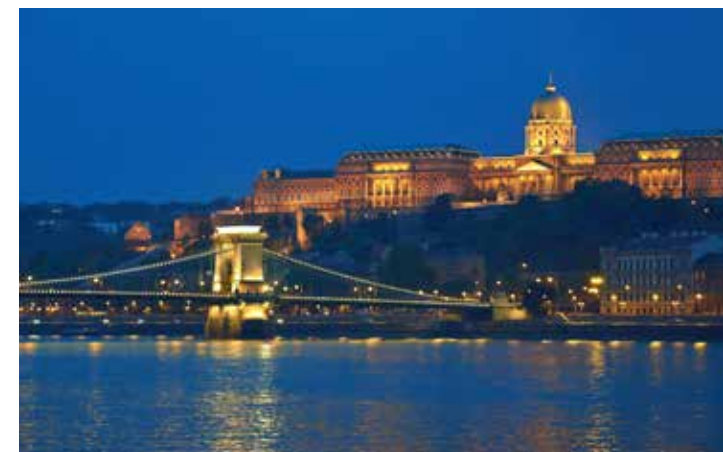
A lot of experiences, ideas and proposals were gathered concerning the real measures and organizational solutions by which client-based violence may be reduced.

The result of this joint work was an adaptable strategic model that was based on Norwegian methods that will serve as a common starting point for local authorities to prevent and treat client-based violence. Six local authorities participated in the pilot activities of the project:

COUNTRY FACTS 2013

	Hungary	EU -28
GDP per capita	17.000	25.500
Economic growth	1.1	0.1
Unemployment rate	10.2	10.8
Youth unemployment rate	27.2	23.4
Gender pay gap	20.1	16.4
At-risk-of-poverty-rate	14.0	17.0

Budapest 16. District, Pápa Town, Berhida, Alsóörs Village, and Törökbálint. As a result of a three-day pilot training and a professional workshop, the local authorities made concrete steps to prevent and protect against third-party violence, and they started to alter the local regulations through the cooperation between employees and employers. Specific recommendations to follow-up findings during the project have been identified.



Public employees may be free to perform their tasks in a suitable and safe environment, with adequate protection.

Mr Jenő Schmidt, President of The Hungarian Association of Municipalities and Regions



We are delighted that we have been participating in the adoption of a programme in Hungary that may contribute to the development of the working culture in the public sector and communal cooperation as a whole. At the final stage of the project, we will provide the elected mayors with a methodological

guide to extend the work to more municipalities. If we are able to coordinate and develop this work into a national network, we expect that the government and the national legislature will support our activities.

High quality service provision for citizens

Mrs Viktória Zöld-Nagy, Deputy-State Secretary, State Secretariat responsible for Territorial Public Administration in the Prime Minister's Office
Clients' focus is expressed in the Hungarian Public Administration Development Programme: "the aim is to work for the creation of a client-oriented service-provider taking into consideration the needs and rights of the client, the simplification of the processes, and the reduction of the burdens on the clients. An increased

emphasis will be put on the development of services that are accessible for everyone and are of uniformly high quality". However, we also have to establish working conditions that protect the administration. The quality of the services can only be guaranteed if the human factors are adequate as well. Taking care of the administration is a governmental responsibility.

Successful project

Mrs. Péterné Boros, Secretary-General, The Trade Union of Public Servants and Municipal Employees

There are three key factors behind this success: First, the choice of the topic. Whereas the main topic is not taboo, it is not a common theme to examine the relationship of the public service-provision, the citizen and the local authority office from the point of view of the office and the municipal employees. We remain committed to the idea of establishing a client-

oriented, citizen-friendly administrative culture with focus on the client. However, this does not exclude the administration – they deserve respect and protection. Second: stress experienced at the work place is a major risk factor. The prevention and protection against client violence fits well in this process. This project should be extended to other areas of the public service provision, e.g. education, health care, social care and other different public service provision sectors.

We have established our own internal procedures to prevent and protect against client violence

Mr Tamás Cseh, Notary of Berhida town authority
We made an action plan that contains the scheduling of the tasks connected to the creation of a new system of protection and prevention, and have started developing the necessary local regulations.



From Opening Session at Final Project Conference in Százhalombatta



Norwegian Ambassador and Norwegian Project Partners at Final Project Conference in Százhalombatta

LITHUANIA

Project information

Title: Social dialogue at the grass-root municipal level

Project promoter: National Association of Officers' Trade Unions of Lithuania

Project partners: Kupiskis, Ukmerge, Ignalina municipalities and Business Employers Association in Lithuania.

Norwegian partner: Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees.

Total budget: € 88.887

Focus: Local groups were created with representatives from politicians, administration, trade unions and businesses, supported by other local interest groups and youth activists. These groups act as pilots to practice social dialogue as a method for solving challenges of mutual interest to the community and the employees.

Activities: Seminars, training sessions, coaching by project management, public meetings involving citizens, field visits.

Status and challenges

- The programme initiated contact and helped us establish a constructive cooperation between several trade unions and employers associations in Lithuania.

- At national level the project established regular meetings, shared information and addressed issues of mutual interest between National Officer's Trade Union Centre, Business Employers Association, The Union of Educational Sector Workers and Medical Workers Trade Union.
- A need for predictable and well-functioning administrative systems at the different levels

Project results:

We may need conflict to understand the dialogue

Mr. Tomas Tomilinas, Project Manager



interactions, especially at the local level. This is to a large extent due to the hierarchical tradition of power relations. Lithuanian municipalities work as implementing agencies of numerous central state

Social dialogue is not only about harmony; it is also about social conflict. When social conflict and interests are blurred and mistreated, there is no potential for social change. In Lithuania we have weak traditions for social dialogue. We have totally bureaucratized our social

COUNTRY FACTS 2013

	Lithuania	EU- 28
GDP pr capita	18.300	25.500
Economic Growth	3.3	0.1
Unemployment rate (2013)	11.8	10.8
Youth unemployment	21.9	23.4
Gender pay gap	12.6	16.4
At-risk-of-poverty rate (2012)	18.6	17.0

regulations and paper instructions. We need to develop our democracy from the bottom up. Today there are very few initiatives from the local level. We need to be more responsive to local needs and learn processes for involving people and acting on good initiatives. That's why we needed a program like this. The project established an arena for effective work between partners in the labour market. We even submitted agreed proposals to new national legislation. This is a good start. Communication and trust between different players is important both at local and national level.

Why dialogue is important

Mr Jonas Jarutis, Mayor of Kupiškis:

It was really interesting to visit Steinkjer municipality. I hoped the Norwegians would demonstrate the most outstanding results of their local social dialogue. And what we met was a country where the public sector is treated seriously! This is not the case in Lithuania. The public sector in Lithuania is often seen as an old relic. We really need brilliant ideas for developing

the local public sector, both when it comes to creating jobs and improving the working environment of public sector workers. We need more job opportunities for young people, and we need to strengthen the assistance and cooperation with local businesses. That is why the dialogue is so important.

Solved problems without additional funding

Mrs. Elena Mirinavičienė, Social dialogue group promoter in Ukmergė municipality:



Our group has developed the health care program “Your job cares for your health”, which was born in the local committee meeting and approved by local politicians. The main idea is that public and private sector workers get the right and encouragement

to visit health institution during work hours to prevent illness. By this initiative we showed that we could solve problems without additional money or special assistance. Inspired by our colleagues in Kupiskis and discussions in our local council we have also been able to renovate our ambulance centre. Now the staff are happy as they have a place to eat and rest during their 24 hours shifts. I am also sure our citizens will benefit from this. Now we are moving to other topics – public security and regulation of supermarket development is on the top of the agenda.

Dialogue to improve conditions for people at risk

Mr. Paulius Briedis, leader of local group in Kupiškis:
Our project in Kupiškis deals with people in a high-risk situation. We do not have enough professional psychologists to deal with this problem so we came up with the idea of training a group of volunteers that can play a role as mediators between people at risk and professionals. Volunteers that are easily available for people to talk to. We believe that by having constructive dialogue and cooperation in our municipality we can improve the conditions for the people we serve.



LITHUANIA

Project information

Project title: Decent Work for Social Workers at Municipal Level

Focus: Awareness-raising on challenges regarding decent work and threats and violence for social workers in Lithuania.

Project promoter: Lithuanian Trade Union of State, Budget and Public Service Employees

Project partner: Association of Local Authorities of Lithuania

Norwegian partner: Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities

Project budget: Euro 85.723

Key Activities: national study on third party violence, training seminars for social workers, national conferences, elaboration of guidelines.

Status and challenges

- The social dialogue and tripartite dialogue in the local government sector is relatively weak: The municipalities are not formally established as employers, and the local government organisations do not take part in national tripartite negotiations
- The trade union affiliation is low, both in the private and public sector.
- The project focuses on decent work for social workers. The majority of social workers are

women, and salaries are low, below the average for Lithuania. There is a high risk of threats and violence against social workers because of the social crisis.

Project results:

Ms. Irena Petraitiene, President of the Lithuanian Trade Union of State, Budget and Public Service Employees.



For us as a project promoter, the project has been important. The situation for social workers is very difficult because of the unemployment and crisis – it makes clients more frustrated and desperate. The project has contributed to putting

decent work for local social workers on the political agenda. We know of course that the national financial situation is difficult, but we cannot accept being ignored as this reduces the quality of services to the client. We cannot accept that local governments only pay social workers for 11 months – expecting them to cover their December salary through reduction of expenses during the rest of the year. We need to have sector collective agreements, and this project is a step in the right direction.

COUNTRY FACTS 2013

	Lithuania	EU -28
GDP per capita	18.300	25.500
Economic growth	3.3	0.1
Unemployment rate	11.8	10.8
Youth unemployment rate	21.9	23.4
Gender pay gap	18.6	16.4
At-risk-of-poverty-rate	9.6	17.0



Tangible improvements

Ms. Audrone Vareikyte, Lithuanian Association of Municipalities



We see some tangible improvements towards better health and safety at work. The present environment in Lithuania is now positive towards improving the working situation of social workers, and we have the important support of

the Parliamentary Committee. We are beginning to understand that the best results will be achieved through social dialogue.

20 years is a short time

Mr. Algirdas Sysas, Deputy Speaker, Parliamentary Committee on Social Affairs and Labour



Lithuania has only 20 years of social dialogue, which is a short time. We have however made some improvements regarding the bargaining process between trade unions, the central government and local governments, e.g. positive changes in the Labour Code.

The EU plays a positive role when it comes to social dialogue, both because of the actual directives, but also because of the open borders as people travel and see working conditions in other countries. The high emigration from Lithuania however is a challenge; workers prefer to leave the country, knowing that working conditions and salaries are better in other countries.

Women social workers are too quiet

Ms. Egle Radisauskiene, Ministry of Social Security and Labour



I liked this project from the beginning, partly because of its focus on trust and confidence.

The project includes both the employer and the trade union side, which is very good. The basis for the tripartite dialogue must be

a strong bipartite dialogue; the employers and the employees are the driving force. We must reinforce this dialogue – and of course also the tripartite body. The focus on social workers is important. Social workers are too quiet, the majority are women. They accept lower salaries and worse working conditions than many other groups. People need to be paid decent salaries – and salaries must be regulated by law.

Establishing a trade union helped

Ms. Vaiva Sukaviciene, Zarasai town, Social Assistance Centre



People in Lithuania do often not believe in trade unions, don't think they are effective. At my job, we realized that trade unions represent an important basis for social dialogue and established a local trade union section in May

2013 with five members. Before that we were in a big crisis. In addition to the lack of budgeted salary for December we were asked to reduce our salaries and also the numbers of hours spent on each client family – which made it impossible for us to do a good job. After establishing our trade union section we talked to director of the municipality, and now things are improving, small salary increase and more time for families. The salaries are still low and the working conditions inadequate, but it is a start.

POLAND

Project information

Title: Social Dialogue in the Municipal Sector and Enterprises

Project promoter: Association of Polish Cities

Norwegian partner: Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS)

Total project budget: Euro 439.959

Focus: Improved working environment, communication and relations between municipal leaders and workers.

Activities: Regional seminars and national competitions for Polish municipalities and enterprises on social dialogue; the winners of the competitions took part in the study tour to Norway.

Status and challenges

- At the moment, the tripartite dialogue in Poland has been suspended by trade unions. In June 2013 three trade unions announced that the dialogue was a fiction because the government and the employers entered into a coalition against the unions. The trade unions protested against the introduction of flexible working time and several other issues, and generally against decision-making without adequate consultation.
- The National Government and employers' representatives are open to come to the table and continue negotiations. Recently, unions of

employees and employers again sat together to work on amendments to the rules for the functioning of social dialogue in Poland.

- In Poland, compared to Norway, employers have an advantage over the employees regarding the labour market. The average unemployment rate is 11,7%, however, in some regions up to 20%, which makes the situation for employees difficult.

Project results:

*Ms. Alicia Grenda, project manager,
Association of Polish Cities.*



Participation in this project inspired us to pay more attention to the values that are important for people working in the local government sector. Poland and Norway are different, but have common challenges at the local level when it comes to recruiting and keeping competent and motivated employees. Polish research shows that the size of salary in itself is insufficient as a motivational factor for employees; personal development and challenges are also very important. Through 10 seminars we disseminated the Norwegian idea of tripartite dialogue

COUNTRY FACTS 2013

	Poland	EU -28
GDP per capita	17.100	25.500
Economic growth	1.6	0.1
Unemployment rate	10.3	10.8
Youth unemployment rate	27.3	23.4
Gender pay gap	6.4	16.4
At-risk-of-poverty-rate	17.1	17.0



as a tool for creating a friendly working environment. At the same time we were able to find Polish good practices, and to give prizes to local government employers who were open for dialogue and for investing in employees.

Similar challenges – different solutions

Mr. Dionizy Duszynski, Mayor of Popielow



I am very grateful to the Association of Polish Cities for this project. The conferences in Poland have been a great opportunity to develop and present good practices from Poland when it comes to social dialogue, and the study tours to Norway have shown the Norwegian status and

initiatives. It has been interesting to see that the challenges are very similar – even though the solutions are different. We visited a kindergarten and a school in the Norwegian municipality Øvre Eiker and saw the friendly and informal relationship between leaders, staff and children as well as the close cooperation between municipal leadership and trade unions.

Excellent project



*Ms. Anna Siejda,
Ministry of Administration
and Digitalization*

This project has been excellent. The competitions on social dialogue among the Polish municipalities have mobilized their energy and their innovation. For

the Ministry, the project has represented a valuable arena for informal meetings and discussions with the Polish municipalities. It is so important that municipalities have the chance to meet and share good practices, nationally and internationally. Very often municipalities do a lot of innovative things, but they are not aware of it themselves, and they don't tell others.

Consensus builds, conflict destroys

*Ms. Maria Helena Sobczyk,
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy*



I have taken part in most of the project activities, and I am very satisfied, especially with the focus on capacity-building. I am also very impressed with the Polish projects that have been developed through the project on local government organization, social dialogue and internal communication. I am very interested in the Norwegian formal and informal negotiations and co-operations between municipal leaders and trade unions, but also in the cooperation with citizens. I am thinking about a saying we have in Poland: agreement and consensus can build – conflict can only destroy....

Interesting to learn about Poland

Ms. Elisabeth Enzinger Søhoel, Øvre Eiker Municipality



During this project, we have received two study visits from Poland, and taken part in one conference in Poland. It was very interesting to learn about the situation in Poland and their projects – and to present our own municipality and what we have achieved.

For us, the Polish visits to our municipality have represented opportunities for our staff. They are proud of what we have achieved and proud to have an opportunity to present it. The municipalities in Norway cannot compete with private sector when it comes to salaries, but participation in international projects may be an important tool to recruit and keep competent staff members.

Project result: Improved social dialogue through bottom up process

The project brought to Polish Municipalities, especially Municipal offices, a new insight into the subject of social dialogue value in the work place. Both competitions and seminars became an educational platform for employers and employees, who learned about the Norwegian model of social dialogue but in the same time analyzed their own situation. The social dialogue on national level has been suspended for political reasons, however, it may be held successfully on the local level and this gives hope that it will be a bottom up transfer process.

ROMANIA

Project information

Title: Enhancing Social Dialogue for Civil Servants

Project promoter: The National Agency for Civil Servants-NACS

Project partner: The Romanian Municipalities Association-AMR

Norwegian partner: Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities-KS

Total project budget: Euro 351 778

Focus: Improve social dialogue and bipartite dialogue structures and practices.

Activities: Research studies, development of guidelines for social dialogue, trainings and seminars and exchanges of good practices at regional and local level, awareness campaign on the role and importance of dialogue

Status and challenges

- Despite being regulated by specific laws, social dialogue works only to a limited degree in practice. Establishing a dialogue between all stakeholders is both a means and a goal.
- Parity commissions, as bipartite dialogue structures for civil servants, illustrate the general trend, with few examples of commissions that work, and therefore need to be further reinforced.
- Challenges could be seen in terms of: Legislation which needs to be updated, inter-correlated, and

with the participation of all parties concerned. Practice and customs, institutions further built, practices improved, and mentality: more open towards COs – co-problematising, co-deciding, co-working etc.

Project results:

Mrs Laura Borieacan, Project Manager



was undertaken, a curriculum was developed for a training program dedicated to members of parity commissions. 150 civil servants were trained on social dialogue, out of which 30 trainers, exchanges of good practices and an awareness campaign on social dialogue were carried out, and 30 representatives from the target group participated in a study visit to Norway to exchange knowledge and good practices. 5 pilot regions were selected

A pilot study on the current activity and functionality of parity commissions, trade unions and decent work conditions was undertaken in the selected regions. In addition, a comparative study on social dialogue mechanisms and practices in public administration in Romania and Norway

COUNTRY FACTS 2013

	Romania	EU -28
GDP per capita	12.800	25.500
Economic growth	3.5	0.1
Unemployment rate	7.3	10.8
Youth unemployment rate	23.6	23.4
Gender pay gap	9.7	16.4
At-risk-of-poverty-rate	22.6	17.0

to participate in the project. That is, representatives from the parity commissions at local level, the state representatives in the regions (prefects), and county councils in the following regions: Bucharest, Iasi, Timis, Galati and Brasov.

Opening the path towards an effective implementation of social dialogue mechanisms

Mr József Birtalan, President, National Agency of Civil Servants

The support of our partners materialised in their active involvement in the design and development of project activities, which, in the long-term produce sustainable results for the Romanian public administration. The study visit to Norway for the group of Romanian civil servants was a good framework for making acquaintance with some of the best practices and procedures of Norwegian institutions, to further analyse, and probably also implement some of them into the Romanian administrative system. The informative material, the exchange of best practices and the round-tables

organized all contributed to the sustainability of the project.

Stimulated the debates and the sharing of ideas

Mr Tudor Pendiuc, President , Association of Romanian Municipalities-AMR

We appreciate the partnership in the implementation of the project. The activities are of great interest for the Romanian municipalities, and the project greatly contributes to improving the functioning of the parity commissions and dissemination of good practices. Employees of the pilot institutions had an opportunity to learn more about the parity commissions, the methods of implementing decent work, and to analyze the suggestions made in order to improve legislation regulating the social dialogue. The study visit to Norway gave us better knowledge and understanding of the Norwegian social system, and of the limits and opportunities for implementing similar measures in Romania. We would like to further develop activities and joint initiatives on the issue.

Help in finding solutions to our own problems

Mrs Mihaela Boran, Head of Office of the Prefect's Institution in Timis County

I benefitted from the study visit to Norway as partner in the project and as President of the parity commission. This contributed to knowledge of the Norwegian public administration and their experience with social dialogue mechanisms and practices. This knowledge will be of help to our institution in finding

solutions to some of our problems, and some of the county's problems.

We need to find new models

Mrs Tisbia Verona Posedaru, Legal Adviser, Brasov County Council

As a civil servant in the local government, taking part, over the years, in the disciplinary and parity

commissions established within the authority, participating in the establishment of the local civil servants trade union and in the closure of collective agreements, the study visit within the Norwegian government made me realize that things could actually work differently and we, by all means, need to find new models suitable to our environment and to our culture.



Decent work and tripartite cooperation: A National responsibility

Ms. Charlotte Gedde Vidnes, Norwegian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs/ International Labour Organisation

The Fund for Decent Work and Tripartite dialogue is an important tool for putting the Governments' national strategy on decent work into concrete terms.

Internationally, the Fund is a new development. It came into place thanks to a strong cooperation between the social partners and the relevant authorities. Through the Fund we hope to contribute to strengthening social dialogue in the eligible countries and bring forward the decent work agenda. The projects focusing on social dialogue and decent work at the local and regional level are good examples.

Decent work: an important topic

Threats and violence at the work place is a highly relevant topic in ensuring decent work and reducing occupational risks today. Violence against women and men at work is a global concern, and is very high on the ILO agenda. It is linked to changes in work organization, intensity of work, volatility of wages and jobs, and the impact of the economic crisis.

The role of the state in tripartism

Many countries in Europe today find themselves in a situation with limited room for manoeuvre in fiscal policy and limited scope for employment and social

policy. Labour rights are under pressure. At national, regional and international level we must strive to uphold standards and rights. This is the very basis of the ILOs work. A firm belief in standards and rights must guide us as we develop coherent policies to boost output and create good jobs. Social dialogue is particularly important in times of economic crises and unemployment. The social partners are able to bring legitimacy to controversial and necessary structural reforms.

Good and confident cooperation between the social partners and the authorities is an important part of the basis for a high standard working life. Tripartite social dialogue plays a key role in formulating and implementing new policies that improve the quality of jobs, particularly in terms of employment security, decent wages and a healthy relationship between wages and productivity.

There is a close connection between general economic policy on the one hand and the development of wage-costs, prices and competitiveness on the other.



Focus on the public sector and the role of the public employers

The public sector is internationally an underestimated field. The importance of a high quality and efficient public sector is a key priority today. A skilled and motivated public sector workforce is critical to an efficient and effective public sector; it is therefore necessary to offer rewarding and sustainable public sector careers with a view to creating a more skilled and diverse public sector. At the same time, the interaction between the government as employer and workers and their representatives varies. Countries have very different systems with different types of agencies acting as the employer in the public sector. In many countries, there is still a lack of full recognition of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining for public sector workers.

In some cases, the roles and responsibility of the employers in the public sector are not clear, in others there are different understandings of roles and responsibilities between the national and local level – or between employers and employees. Each country has to find its own solutions, but it is always important to create a good and solid dialogue that institutes trust between the three parties.

The economic crisis in Europe does in many countries lead to the reduction of salaries and benefits for public employees. We firmly believe that without a strong social dialogue this may cause conflicts that may aggravate the crisis.



Strengthening social dialogue in European local governments: CEMR and EPSU

Ms. Angelika Poth-Mogele, CEMR, and Ms. Christine Jakob, EPSU

The European social dialogue refers to discussions, consultations, negotiations and joint actions involving organisations representing the two sides, the employers and the employees / workers, and it can take place at all levels including local, regional, national, and European. In this regard, the European Commission is responsible for developing social dialogue at the European level.

CEMR

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) is the umbrella organisation for national associations representing regional and local government in 41 European Countries. Local and regional governments employ over 17 million workers across Europe to deliver essential public services. As employers, they share many common interests and face common challenges: working time and conditions, equal access, and new employment patterns. In this regard, social dialogue is an essential tool for both workers and employees to ensure proper working conditions and relations. As a representative of regional and local government

as employers, CEMR works to influence European employment-related proposals and promotes the development of social dialogue in EU member countries.

EPSU

The European Federation of Public Service Unions, EPSU, is the largest federation of the ETUC, The European Trade Union Confederation. EPSU comprises 8 million public service workers from over 265 trade unions. EPSU organises workers in the energy, water and waste sectors, health and social services and local and national administration, in all European countries including in the EU's Eastern Neighborhood. EPSU is the recognised regional organisation of Public Services International (PSI).

Joint CEMR-EPSU social dialogue committee

CEMR and EPSU represent employers' and employees / workers' organisations within the European Social Dialogue Committee on Local and Regional Government. Employers and unions

discuss employment policies as well as changes to the labour market and to European regulations.

Arena for sustainable contacts

For the 7 projects described in this brochure, CEMR and EPSU have been important for the project partners. The Social Dialogue Committee has provided a common arena for meeting between the project partners from the different countries. The Social Dialogue Committee also represents an arena for discussion and cooperation in the future, and thus increases the sustainability of the project contacts and the project results.

Joint initiatives against third party violence

A key issue for the 7 projects coordinated by KS and NUMGE has been threats and violence at the work place from clients and users, so-called third party violence. CEMR and EPSU were part of the initiative by several European social partners that adopted guidelines to prevent third-party violence and harassment at work in September

2010. The guidelines encourage employers to establish a clear framework for the prevention and management of violence by third parties in the context of the employment relationship.

The guidelines are based on best practices from the represented sectors. The document proposes a list of the many forms that third-party violence can take, from 'disrespect, to more serious threats and physical assault' to 'criminal offences' or even 'cyber-bullying/cyber-harassment'. Harassment and violence at work can be inflicted by clients, customers, patients, service users, pupils or parents, members of the public, or service providers. The guidelines state that violence not only 'undermines an individual's health and dignity' but also has a 'real economic impact in terms of absences from the workplace, morale and staff turnover'.

The social partners propose, on this basis, a policy framework for employers that includes a range of elements, e.g.:

- information, such as a definition of third-party violence or a warning to third parties that harassment and violence against employees will not be tolerated;
- a policy based on risk assessment which can take into account the various occupations, locations and working practices of employees;
- appropriate training for management and employees on, among other things, 'techniques

to avoid or manage conflicts';

- a clear policy on the support to be provided to employees;
- the establishment of procedures to monitor and investigate allegations of harassment and violence from third parties.

Good example from Estonia

National implementation is key to promoting Tripartite Dialogue and combatting Threats and Violence, and the 7 projects described in this publication are very relevant in this regard. We see the Estonian Memorandum of Understanding on the need for the prevention and mitigation of third-party violence in the workplace as a very interesting example. The agreement is the first agreement in Estonia to tackle the prevention and mitigation of third-party violence in the workplace between social partners and was signed by the Trade Union of the Estonian State and Self Government Institutions Workers, the Association of Estonian Cities and the Association of Estonian Municipalities at the final project conference in September 2014.

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