SOCIAL DIALOGUE

`Social dialogue` describes the negotiations conducted by the social partners (i.e. employers' and workers' organisations) in order to defend the interests of their members. It is recognised as an EU objective under Article 151 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

Social dialogue contributes to the development of European social policy. The social partners are involved in discussions, consultations, negotiations and joint actions conducted at European level, in addition to those conducted at national level.

Prior to taking action in the social field, the European Commission must consult the social partners (Article 154 TFEU). Then, the partners can negotiate agreements that can be implemented independently according to their national practices, or request their implementation through a Council decision (Article 155 TFEU).

European social dialogue may be either:

- tripartite (social partners and EU institutions) or
- bipartite (employer organisations and trade unions).

Examples of agreements resulting from social dialogue include those on harassment and violence at work (2007) and on inclusive labour markets (2010).

SEE ALSO

- Charter of Fundamental Rights
- European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)
- Social partners
- Social policy
- European Commission’s social dialogue website