Transnational company agreements and other levels of social dialogue

4th Meeting of the Expert Group on Transnational Company Agreements

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Context

Study for the French Presidency of the EU

- Aim: Exploring the links between different levels of transnational social dialogue
- Exploratory study conducted by Audencia Nantes School of Management and the Catholic University of Louvain
- Time frame: September 2008 – March 2009
Research rarely covers different levels

- Research teams are specialized in one particular level of transnational social dialogue
- Practices at each level raise complex questions for research and practice
- Possibly no links between the different levels of transnational social dialogue
- Strategies of the involved actors who may want to separate the different levels
Possible scenarios

- The different levels of transnational social dialogue co-exist next to each other without any current or potential links.
- Step by step, the different levels of transnational social dialogue build a structured architecture as in some national systems.
- There is a certain convergence between the different levels of transnational social dialogue, but no systematic coordination.
Scope of the research

Social dialogue  Cross-sector level  Sector level  Company level

International  

European  

National  

Company level
Scope of the research

Social dialogue
- International
- European
- National

Cross-sector level

Sector level
- ESSD

Company level
- EWC

International
National
European
Research methodology

Different methodologies

- Literature review aiming at covering publications on the different levels of transnational social dialogue
- Content analysis of different agreements negotiated at different levels
- Interviews with experts and actors involved in different levels of transnational social dialogue
Main results

Links between different company agreements

- Some companies have negotiated several transnational agreements
- Employers usually consult other companies or associations before negotiating a transnational agreement
- International and European union federations develop standard agreements and favour coordination
Main results

Legal framework of TCA and ESSD

- No legal framework for transnational company agreements
- Precise legal framework and institutional support in the area of the European sectoral social dialogue (European sectoral social dialogue committees, implementation)
Main results

Actors involved in TCA and ESSD

- In principle, the actors on the employer side differ between the company and the sector level.
- However, in some sectors, single companies that have negotiated a transnational agreement may have an important influence at the sector level.
- Possible coordination via the international or European union federations that negotiate both at the company and the sector level.
Main results

Subjects covered

ESSD
EU policies
EU enlargement

EU policies
EU enlargement

Training
Health & security
Non-discrimination

Organization of social dialogue

Restructuring

Financial participation
Data protection

Worldwide TCA
Freedom of association
Forced labour
Child labour
Wages
AIDS

Working time

Environment

European TCA

Freedom of association
Forced labour
Child labour
Wages
AIDS

Working time

Environment

Freedom of association
Forced labour
Child labour
Wages
AIDS

Restructuring
Main results

Implementation of TCA and ESSD

- Monitoring and follow-up procedures at the different levels often use similar tools: annual meetings among the signatory parties, definition of performance indicators, establishment of reports, conflict resolution mechanisms, implementation through national agreements or unilateral management decisions, ...

- These similar approaches seem to emerge because the actors face similar challenges
Conclusions

Links exists and will probably continue to develop

- The links between the different levels of transnational social dialogue exist
- Since many challenges are similar between the different levels and since some actors are involved in several levels, these links will probably continue to develop
- It seems however unlikely that the different levels will create a structured architecture such as in some national systems
Appendix: Further readings
Further readings

Articles

Further readings

Reports


Further readings

Book
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