

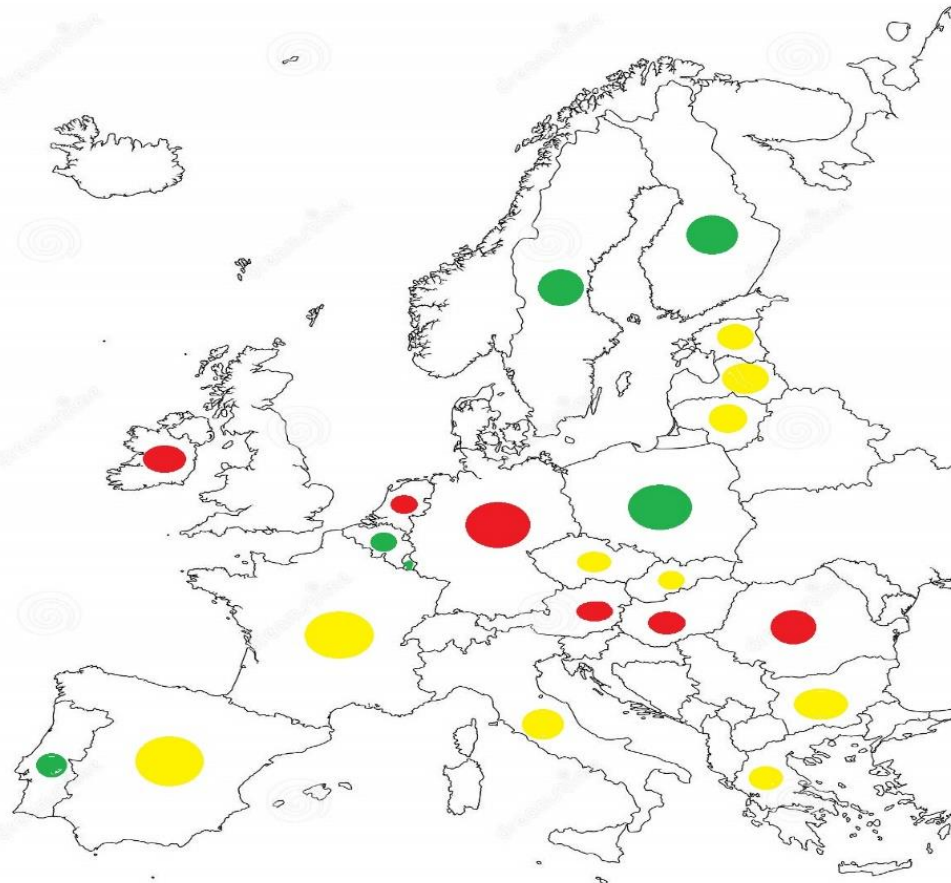
**Annex 3 to Item 8
 Trade Union Involvement in the RRF**

Adopted at the virtual Executive Committee Meeting of 5-6 October 2021

Trade Union Involvement in the RRF

POOR / NOT SATISFACTORY
IMPROVABLE / JUST INFOs
POSITIVE / SATISFACTORY

**Trade Union Involvement Index
 – NRRPs 2021**



AT	IT
BE	SE
BG	FI
EE	ES
LV	PT
LT	IE
RO	LU
CZ	NL
SK	DE
GR	PL
HU	FR

Country	TU involvement on NRRPs
CZECH REPUBLIC	<p>There were several meetings (in November) on the preliminary version. CMKOS had a number of comments. No feedback received.</p> <p>The CMKOS was invited to comment on the recovery plan. The invitation appeared more as a formal duty of government, rather than true consultation. Not sure if input provided can influence anything.</p> <p>Even in the case of preparing a National Recovery Plan, it would be appropriate to have a co-determination element.</p> <p>Not satisfied with the involvement.</p>
SLOVAKIA	<p>KOZ SR demanded that the approval of the NPRR be preceded by a broad professional discussion. Acceptance of the planned changes by the general public and the whole political spectrum is essential for its effective implementation. Slovak colleagues are afraid that the way the plan was drafted, its secrecy and the low level of consultation may endanger its feasibility and sustainability.</p> <p>In October 2020, a kind of reservoir was presented to discuss how and for what reforms the European Union funds from the NPRR will be used. The form of the discussion was unclear, as potential actors, interest groups, social partners, but also political entities did not know how to get involved in it, apart from presentation through the media.</p> <p>In December 2020, the Online Public Consultation on NPRR was launched, which was more of a presentation than a discussion. The consultation took place between representatives of state institutions in one and a half hour moderated blocks. TUs did not assume that that form of consultation corresponded to the European Commission's vision of a participatory process and social dialogue. The government did not use the available legislative instruments and did not continuously consult the individual parts of the NPRR or with the social partners.</p> <p>Standard legislative procedure was made in March 2021, but it should be notices the Slovak colleagues do not consider 10 working days for material of this scope and seriousness to be adequate. The NPRR was withdrawn from the tripartite meeting due to the fact that the submitter did not deal with the submitted amendments. The social partners were promised that the NPRR would be discussed at the tripartite on 26 April 2021. As the NPRR was submitted to the European Commission by the end of April 2021, tripartite negotiations did not happen, neither did the social partners' comments affect the resulting NPRR.</p>
POLAND	<p>Public consultation held and a draft of the Polish recovery and resilience plan was provided. Monitoring Committee was set up to: implement the plan; analyse the impact of implemented activities on the economy and its individual sectors, society and regional development; ensure complementarity of interventions implemented under other funding sources, complementary to the thematic scope of the plan; undertake activities essential to streamline the processes of implementing reforms and investments aimed at them. The Committee is composed of representatives of institutions involved in the implementation of the Polish RRP, as well as representatives of trade union organisations and employers' organisations indicated by the Social Dialogue Council, representatives of civil society organisations, and representatives of Joint Commission of Government and Local Authorities.</p> <p>In relation to Country Specific Recommendations, the Polish recovery and resilience plan provides activities considering the improvement of the quality of legislation, in particular by increasing the efficiency of legislators' work, facilitating the public's access to information about the applicable law, ensuring effective public consultations and involving social partners in the policy-making process.</p> <p>In this sense, there has been an acknowledgment of the inefficiency of social dialogue in Poland.</p>

	<p>The Plan was also presented and discussed in the national social dialogue council. Afterwards, Social Partners pushed the Government to include some amendments in the NRRP. This activity was successful and thus the NRRP with changes (and TU inputs) has been submitted to the EU Commission.</p> <p>Involvement was positive. However, the committee represents a large group of stakeholders, and it is difficult to always find compromises and concrete solutions.</p>
GERMANY	<p>In November 2020 there was an exchange of view between representatives of the DGB and the Finance Ministry at technical level. DGB colleagues were broadly informed about the plans by the German government and we were given the opportunity to provide input. A draft of the German Recovery and Resilience Plans was not provided at that time.</p> <p>In January 2021 the German government has published a draft of the Recovery and Resilience plan. After the publication of the plan, DGB asked to submit a written statement on the draft. The consultation was not very effective. DGB's main priorities were not taken on board.</p> <p>No further consultation has taken place. The impact of written input is not clear.</p> <p>Involvement not satisfactory. The Partnership Principle (present in other funds) should be a blue print for the RRF. Otherwise, Trade Unions will not be able to contribute to the design and implementation of the NRRP.</p>
SPAIN	<p>After several request from the Trade Unions, a Tripartite group with the government and the social partners was set up during the design stage of the National Plan. However, it was limited to the exchange of information.</p> <p>Exception for processes of social concertation on two key reforms: pensions; labour market.</p> <p>Lack of participation of the Autonomous Communities (regional level) in the design of the Plans.</p> <p>An effort in providing information has been made, but not participation. Several meetings took place with ministries, unfortunately without the possibility to influence the draft or change what was written.</p> <p>Trade unions requested that government improve the participation of the social partners in the European Semester and in the implementation of the recovery plan.</p> <p>The Government has agreed to reinforce the involvement of social partners in the consultation. Trade unions want higher cooperation among social partners, and a higher participation in the authority bodies.</p> <p>Spanish colleagues claimed to participate in the assessment authority, monitoring the implementation of the NRRP.</p>
ROMANIA	<p>NO Involvement at all. Trade Unions were completely excluded. Even after letters and requests to the Government. Also after intervention of political opposition. Gov. refused.</p> <p>The European Institutions intervened.</p> <p>And a meeting has been set-up with 1 representative for trade unions and 1 for employers to participate.</p> <p>Romanian unions submitted packages of reforms on:</p> <p>Pension, social dialogue, minimum wage, digital and green transition, fiscal measures. The Gov. did not consider the packages and proposals.</p> <p>Trade unions and Employers Organisation, jointly, are preparing a complaint to be sent to the EU institutions.</p>

	<p>End of May, a technical mission from EU took place. Different ministers involved.</p> <p>The EU delegation accepted to have a meeting w. trade unions and they received packages from TU. They promised to negotiate, on behalf of TU, with the GOV to include some proposals in the NRRP implementation stage.</p> <p>More in detail: the social partners were not effectively involved in the elaboration of the NRRP, neither in the first draft nor in the second. In the case of the last draft of NRRP sent to the Commission, there has been only one consultation to which the social partners were invited, but the discussions took place with the social partners not knowing the Government's intentions. The social partners' opinions were heard but no feedback was provided. The final NRRP draft was posted on the website and subsequently approved by the Government in April.</p> <p>Within the NRRP it is mentioned that the social dialogue is non-functional, the cause being identified in the absence of the capacity of the social partners to get involved in the elaboration of public policies. At the level of reforms, however, no measures are identified to contribute to improving the situation. They are talking only about grants for the social partners, in fact from the statements of Minister MEIP they are addressed exclusively to the Economic and Social Council, in the same chapter with investments for justice. Nevertheless, the allocations are completely insignificant (approximately 5 million euro, given that 100 million euros are allocated for increasing the resilience of NGOs). Granting only grants is certainly not a constructive approach to the dysfunctional social dialogue in Romania. The disappearance of the sectoral collective bargaining and the precariousness of the industrial relations are not of interest. In fact, lately the behaviour of the various representatives of the Government regarding the trade union organisations have strengthened this contempt and lack of interest for the active labour force in Romania.</p>
LATVIA	<p>In December, during the meeting of the National Tripartite Cooperation Council, a discussion on NRRP took place. The document was not received previously. The government explained that the document was not ready and was asking for the social partners' input. The guidelines for the NRRP were presented.</p> <p>Latvian unions provided input to the GOV.</p> <p>Unions were excluded from the consultation process while NGOs were included.</p> <p>February (multi-stakeholders event): the first consultation of the draft nRRP in NTCC. First time the social partners received the nRRP. Social partner inputs are not included in this draft.</p> <p>Trade Unions and Employment Organisations sent a joint letter to the EU Commission to complaint about the lack or poorness of the involvement.</p> <p>In April the situation improved with several meetings:</p> <p>Consultation between social partners and the Ministry of Finance (Institution developing the National RRP). The latter received detailed inputs from social partners and the local government organisation. Discussion of social partner inputs and current state of nRRP.</p> <p>Stakeholders introduced amendments to the second NRRP draft. Some trade union proposals have been included and some funding allocated.</p>
FRANCE	<p>After pressure from the French Trade Unions, the first working meeting with the French government (<i>European and International Department of the French social ministries and the secretariat on European affairs of the French Prime Minister</i>) on the French NRRP took place on 17 December 2020 and the first documents were received on 23 December 2020. A second working meeting has taken place on 5 February 2021. The latest update on the French NRRP was on 12 March 2021 within the framework of a broader meeting on the preparation of an informal EPSCO Council. The French government has accepted the proposal of trade unions,</p>

	<p>supported by other French social partners, to annex the contribution of French social partners to the NRRP as it is for the National Reform Program within the European semester cycle.</p> <p>Unions regret that the consultation on the NRRP is strictly framed by the recovery plan “France Relance” presented on the 3rd of September 2020 after limited information meetings with French social partners during the summer 2020. There is no room of manoeuvre to adapt the French NRRP following the consultation of social partners as any arbitrations and trade-offs have been already made at political level. There is also no exchanges within the National Committee on Following-up the Recovery (“Comité National de suivi de la relance”) on the Recovery and Resilience Facility and the French Recovery and Resilience Plan. Some features of the French NRRP have already been put in place and there is no proper involvement of French social partners in the implementation of the NRRP. FO has called to ensure an effective involvement of social partners in the implementation and the follow-up through the French Committee of Social Dialogue on European and International Affairs to ensure that milestones are indeed reached.</p> <p>Unions have also recalled the need to respect the ongoing social agenda - an exercise of concertation between the</p> <p>French government and French social partners - and to adapt the French NRRP to its conclusions.</p> <p>To summarise, at the beginning no involvement at all. Then pressure from social partners, and discussions for the development of the plan. No meetings on certain issues, social partners were just informed rather than consulted, without the possibility to influence the plan. Ineffective.</p> <p>Much more involved in the second part of designing the NRRPs, even though very limited.</p> <p>There is no monitoring committee on the NRP as the NRP has been combined with the French NRRP for the 2021 cycle of the European Semester.</p> <p>But two monitoring committees, one at political level and the other at technical level, both involving representatives of French social partners including other stakeholders, have been put in place on the national recovery plan called “France Relance”.</p>
PORTUGAL	<p>The Plan has been public and open for comments by the 1st of March. Portuguese trade unions have submitted their comments and were consulted during the process. There is a specific structure to monitor the implementation and, after negotiations, trade unions managed to have a seat in this national commission.</p>
FINLAND	<p>Social partners are normally given opportunities to give their statements and express their views in the committee hearings in the Parliament. Social partners were also heard by the ministries in the preparation phase.</p> <p>The government has arranged a number of stakeholder hearings including trade unions as well as a separate "road trip" to receive feedback from local municipalities in Finland. In addition, on trade unions' initiative, government officials responsible for nRRP preparation have arranged a hearing devoted solely to trade unions in order to exchange ideas, address questions and specify the timing of the process. The parliament of Finland has also invited trade unions to hearings regarding nRRP.</p> <p>Trade union goals related to employment and continuous learning are met in the preliminary nRRP.</p> <p>Overall, trade unions have been involved well in the process.</p>

SWEDEN	Overall, positive assessment of the trade unions' involvement in the preparation and designing of the NRRP.
HUNGARY (1) - MASZSZ	<p>Not been consulted or involved in a meaningful way. There was a public consultation online in December (1st draft). Anyone who could have found the file online could have provided input.</p> <p>600 organisations invited to provide input (online platform).</p> <p>By the end of January , MASZSZ sent their proposal. No answers or any feedback received.</p> <p>GOV started detailing the plan (400 pages), and put it for a second time to a public consultation. Feb-March there was an advertisement on the platform.</p> <p>End of February, a meeting on MFF and RRF was on the agenda of national economic and social council (not the Social Dialogue Council) but there were technical problems, and the meeting was not successful. Very low consultation.</p> <p>During the Private sector consultative forum (end of May): information provided by GOV, but no real discussion. Gov reporting that they have done their job consulting the SP, but it is not true!! And the EU Commission is aware of that!</p>
HUNGARY (2) - MOSZ	<p>3 info channel supporting the consultation process:</p> <p>Civil consultation – to socialise the plan. Give voice to workers and companies.</p> <p>Several information forum.</p> <p>In January 2021, more than 600 social organisation invited to comment the NRRP on the web portal.</p> <p>Role of the permanent committee: intensify information, also as advisory services. Information on the semester and the RRF by inviting relevant and interested organisations. Webinar and conference organised in February.</p> <p>People interviewed: 200 via questionnaire (<i>just one Trade Union</i>) and 20 in-depth interview.</p> <p>70% of those who heard of the plan, know basic principles of the plan.</p> <p>80% had some contact and were involved in the consultation (online)</p> <p>60% knew something about the consultation activity</p> <p>90% of them knew the chapters specific of the plan.</p> <p>60% it was easy to channel their opinion in the consultation online.</p>
ITALY	<p>Italian Unions consider that the discussions held with the Government on the definition of strategic priorities, objectives and resources of the Plan have been inadequate.</p> <p>The role of the trade unions in the designing phase of the plan has been marginal. The criteria and levels of negotiations were not defined or guaranteed, concerning neither reforms, nor investments.</p> <p>CGIL, CISL and UIL asked that the six missions, the sixteen components and the three transversal actions included in the NRRP become the constant object of preventive confrontation and monitoring for a "Participatory governance", with the substantial involvement of the Trade Unions.</p> <p>In addition, many reforms embedded in the plan will have an impact on the economy and employment. Most of them will have a direct impact on work, its organisation, protection and creation, and inevitably also on collective bargaining.</p>

	<p>For this reason, Italian unions believe that these issues should be the subject of a prior and strengthened dialogue among GOV and social partners, where appropriate negotiation can be envisaged, especially for reforms that have a direct and indirect impact on employment and social protection.</p> <p>The NRRP states that the document has been agreed with social partners. That is not true. A couple of meetings with some ministers took place, based on information exchanges. Then, the involvement was very limited.</p> <p>Unions requested a meeting with the Prime Minister Draghi. The meeting was positive, even though just informative. However, the Italian government promised to involve more the social partners in the future, also by setting up a "Monitoring and Implementation Committee", where Trade unions should have some representative.</p> <p>This Committee has been established by Decree, to have a permanent table of consultation of stakeholders. But Trade unions are not satisfied because several actors are allowed to take part in this committee: Universities, NGOs, etc.</p> <p>Italian trade unions call for meaningful involvement, and not just an exchange of information. They hope the situation of their involvement will improve when dealing with the implementation of the Plan.</p>
AUSTRIA	<p>The ÖGB was not involved in the preparation of the recovery plan.</p> <p>After much criticism from the ÖGB and other interest groups about the lack of involvement, an e-mail box was set up for any contributions from interest groups.</p> <p>Despite a letter to Chancellor Kurz, Vice-Chancellor Kogler and Finance Minister Blümel early December 2020, there was no consultation with the ÖGB. The ÖGB has also raised this issue several times in the media.</p> <p>There has not been any meeting with State Secretary Edtstadler, although she had announced this in a telephone conversation with the President of the ÖGB.</p> <p>The ÖGB is still waiting for a dialogue and is ready for constructive cooperation.</p>
BULGARIA	<p>Unions had several positive meeting with the previous Government, especially in the first phase of designing, in December. They developed their own position, and presented it to the government.</p> <p>The four pillars of the plan (Innovative, Green, Connected and Fair Bulgaria) were discussed during a special meeting with the social partners in early November. By the end of November, the social partners provided their views on the first draft of the plan, as well as concrete proposals for projects and reforms to be further included in it.</p> <p>After elections in April, politicians could not agree to make a coalition for a Government and another election is scheduled in July.</p> <p>The previous government did not send the Plan to EC. Now the temporary government has made many changes and it expects to finish before the next parliamentary elections. Unions have had only one meeting with the current government on National Recovery and Resilience Plan but without a chance to influence the plan.</p> <p>Involvement not positive. At the first stage we have participated in many discussions. But it became then just nominal and informative.</p>
LUXEMBOURG	<p>The trade unions sent a joint letter to the Ministers of Finance and Employment (ECOFIN and EPSCO) on 27 November 2020, in which they asked for full involvement in the establishment of the RRP.</p>

	In general, involvement was quite positive.
IRELAND	The preparation of Ireland's Recovery and Resilience Plan was (briefly) discussed at a meeting of the tripartite Labour Employer Economic Forum in February. ICTU responded to a Government civil society consultation on the development of Ireland's plan but has not seen any draft NRRPs. (22 April)
NETHERLANDS	<p>FNV called on the Dutch government to submit a (draft) RRF plan for the Netherlands as soon as possible (already in December), since there were so many companies in trouble, unemployment rising at such a rapid pace, and so many people struggling to make ends meet. The FNV found it incomprehensible that the Dutch government planned to submit the (draft) national RRF plan after the elections in March 2021. There was an urgent need to mitigate the negative consequences of the COVID-19 crisis on employment and social matters through targeted investments, also by taking the necessary steps in order to facilitate the green and digital transitions. The FNV therefore supported the principles of the RRF and believes that the RRF funds could be of added value for the Netherlands. FNV therefore called upon the Dutch cabinet to act decisively and to propose RRF investments in order to maintain employment and work on the economic recovery.</p> <p>FNV has provided the Dutch government with a concrete set of proposals for the Dutch RRF plan. A copy of this plan was sent to the commission. Although the FNV did get positive responses from the commission on this plan, we never received any comments from the Dutch government.</p> <p>Social partners are totally neglected in the Dutch RRF process. No negotiation or information has reached social partners from the government. All the information is toward / from the EU directly.</p>
LITHUANIA	<p>The beginning of the consultation process was chaotic and the involvement of social partners was only a formal gesture without any real constructiveness. Very often social partners were on the same level as non-governmental organisations and their special status in the economy was mostly ignored.</p> <p>There were several streamed public events called “consultations” but in reality it was non-specific discussions on common priorities/ a current situation of the country. Back then there was no draft, no concrete information on financial matters and it seemed like a parody of consultations. After trade unions heavily criticized this kind of process, these public events got more concrete but still the National Recovery and Resilience plan was published very late (16 April), so for a long time the situation was not clear enough to develop our position on the Plan.</p> <p>Later every ministry organised public events on a component they are responsible for. Some ministries did the task better than others. Yet again, it is questionable if a two-hour-long event is enough for all stakeholders to share their inputs and asks questions.</p> <p>There was a possibility to take part in a public e.consultation on the Plan’s priorities but the given time to analyse the document (nearly 200 pages) was inadequate to develop a quality input.</p> <p>Mid-April: Presentation of the part of the nRRP which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (via Microsoft Teams). A possibility to ask questions/ state a short position</p>
GREECE	Above all, meaningful consultation/dialogue on the Greek national R&R Plan has been restricted and superficial, without any possibility for interaction or feedback. SP and CS

	<p>Organisations had no involvement on the design/preparation of the Plan, and no feedback on their views. More specifically, regarding the procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The National R&R Plan was uploaded for public consultation (25 November–20 December 2020) on opengov.gr platform, receiving 47 comments/observations/ proposals submitted by 37 natural and legal persons and bodies. There has been no feedback. - Unions received a letter by the Finance Minister to express their views. GSEE replied sending comments/feedback. No reaction received. - The Economic & Social Council of Greece (OKE) issued an opinion with detailed proposals, regarding each of the four Pillars of the Strategic Plan. There has been no reaction. - Notably, the government publicised ONLY the "Strategic Guidelines" section of the Plan for public consultation. The draft text itself with the proposed measures and budget allocation proposed to the Commission[2] was not made public. For example, the strategic directions mention that about 13 billion euros, will be used to finance private investment, giving only vague references to long-term and sustainable private investment with added productive value for the economy, employment, exports, etc. - Thus, by disclosing an outline but not any content of the Plan,(e.g. proposed allocations), the government de facto has restricted any meaningful, information/debate regarding the transformative potential and resources of the Recovery and Resilience Fund.
BELGIUM	<p>The social partners in Belgium were quite strongly involved in the process of developing the national plan. Only in the starting phase did they not feel involved, but this was rather a consequence of the complex Belgian political system rather than an unwillingness of the government to involve social partners.</p> <p>The first list of possible projects (covering 4 times the available budget) was developed by all the different governments, before they organised a first social partners consultation. On the federal level we provided a trade union input for this in October. Trade unions only received a notice that they received the input.</p> <p>The federal minister of recovery took the lead in the development of the plan. He and his cabinet organised a first meeting with the social partners mid-December, presenting their working schedule for the coming months. They immediately stated that they would involve the social partners, but only the federal social partners. They couldn't take (or didn't want to) the responsibility of consulting the regional social partners on regional government projects. During the rest of the process, Belgian unions only focused on the federal projects and the global coherence of the plan.</p> <p>In January, multiple working group meetings with representatives of the minister were organised, to present the main lines of the total plan on the one hand and the federal investment projects on the other hand. Trade Unions regretted not having received the investment proposals, but they developed a first common social partners advice on the main lines of the plan.</p> <p>The minister organised a meeting later on to give a response to the unions' advice, accompanied by a large written response. After the first advice, the union organisations received the selection of all the investment projects, based on a 130 % budget. From that point on, they received all the information at the same time they sent it to the Commission. In order to be able to still have an influence, Belgian colleagues had the opportunity to give informal advice on the investment projects during multiple working group meetings. During these meetings, not only the representatives of the minister of recovery were present, also</p>

	<p>representatives of other federal ministers to provide more information on the specific content of the investment projects.</p> <p>After these meetings, they developed a second common social partners advice on the investment projects, with the goal of influencing the decision on which projects to maintain in the 100 % budget.</p> <p>Two weeks after the investment projects, TUs received the document consisting of all the planned structural investments.</p> <p>For these, Belgian colleagues followed the same working method as for the investment projects: informal meetings with representatives of different federal ministers, followed by a third social partners advice. Although they formally had the same influence possibilities, Belgian unions quickly noticed that there was no space for real influence: GOV only provided reforms coming from governmental agreements, and the Commission quickly let them know that the total amount of reforms was way too large, so proposing even more additional or different reforms was not possible.</p> <p>In general, there was a quite strong involvement of the social partners, especially after New Year, but the actual influence on the content of the plan was small. And there wasn't the same degree of influence on the regional level, whereas 2/3 of the budget is going to the regions, with important areas such as labour market policy and education.</p>
ESTONIA	<p>In November, the social partners have met with the Prime Minister in a tripartite manner - employers, trade unions and the government. In addition to the national Recovery and Resilience Plan a number of issues have been discussed, many of which have materialised (including the payment of sickness benefits during the COVID-19 crisis).</p> <p>Capacity building for government officials would also have been needed to deepen cooperation with the social partners, not just to inform and consult on the plan.</p> <p>Estonian Unions would like the government to support the occurrence and development of social dialogue in the sectors.</p>

The ETUC strongly believes social dialogue should be the cornerstone of the Recovery Plan, and we welcomed the guidelines to implement the RRF which state that Member States should engage in a broad policy dialogue, which includes social partners, to prepare NRRPs. Moreover, governments should put in place robust coordination mechanisms, both for the planning and implementation phases, involving social partners and CSOs. This would increase both the ownership and the implementation of national plans while strengthening the democratic process. Country reports and NRPS have to monitor and report on how the social partners have been consulted and involved in designing the reforms included in the plan.

Nonetheless, the Trade Unions' involvement both in the Semester and in the NRRPs is not satisfactory. Consultations have been too often disregarded by governments and their effectiveness largely depends on the good will of governments themselves rather than on established practices or rules. Until late January 2021, in the majority of Member States, there has been hardly any involvement of the trade unions in the discussion on the National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRPs). In other places, trade unions were involved, but the quality of such involvement has been poor: basically, in many countries, national authorities presented their priorities and guidelines for national recovery plans (roundtables, public hearings, multi-stakeholder events,

workshops, informal meetings), more as a formal duty and without the chance for social partners to provide input or influence the drafting.

The situation slightly improved as of the end of January 2021, with dedicated consultations, submission of written proposals, high-level meetings with responsible ministers and discussions between representatives of the government and trade unions. Still, in too many Member States, although formal meetings took place, at political and/or technical level, trade unions did not get any draft of the plan or have any insight about the content of the NRRP. The timeframe is the biggest issue once Governments ask for social partners' contribution in written form. When trade unions submitted their documents with priorities of investments and reforms, in most of the cases they did not get any feedback from their National Government/policymakers. Another frequent issue raised by ETUC's affiliates organisation concerns the multi-stakeholders approach: although it is positive to participate in meetings discussing priorities for investments and reforms, the fact that trade unions and employers organisations take part in events together with NGOs, universities, and other civil society organisations, make the exercise less effective.

Anyhow, the vast majority of our affiliates reported that their involvement has been poor or they were not satisfied with the level of involvement. They discussed plans already drafted and in discussion with the EU, with no chance to influence the process.

It is high time to build sounder practices of social dialogue and social partners' involvement in national policy making and with regard to **the RRF**, where these are weak or almost non-existing. This is, of course, a national competence but, unfortunately, experience teaches us that when there is no binding rule, governments too often disregard the need to involve social partners in policy making.

The social partners must have a say and must be able to make their contribution to the design and implementation of national plans. Social partners will neither harm nor slow down the NRRPs, they will rather contribute to the design and ensure a proper implementation of employment, social and other labour related policies.

In conclusion:

- **ETUC urges the Commission to set a binding rule for governments to involve national social partners in the drafting and implementation of the National Recovery and Resilience Plans (and in the framework of the European Semester).** The effectiveness of social partner involvement has to be ensured. The aim of the consultation should be to fix binding priorities as far the allocation of money is concerned.
- No need for a standard process in each EU country (i.e. respect for national practices) but national practice should ensure some **quality criteria of involvement** (Social partner consultations should be timely, meaningful and at an appropriate level, allowing the necessary analysis and proposals and fitting within decision making processes)

Social partners have shown (when properly involved) their competences and commitment to shaping solutions to tackle the immediate effects of the pandemic. Their role is of paramount importance in drawing the path for a sustainable and resilient recovery.