

# TOURISM 2020 – TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDUSTRY

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## I. Introduction

Tourism is one of the fastest growing sector worldwide and particularly in the European Union. It is also one of the most complex sectors for its diversity and inclusion of many related activities with a large impact on the economy and the employment in Europe. Current issues, such as global warming, financial crisis and sustainability, new technologies and demographic changes to name just a few, affect the tourism industry leading to a questioning on the future of the sector.

Employers and workers have indeed the same interest in the future and there is need for cooperation and dialogue amongst all those involved with tourism.

At present, there are 36 European social dialogues going on allowing the European social partners to contribute significantly to defining European social standards (EC, 2010). The social dialogue at European level is a fundamental base to a social Europe and enables workers and employers to determine long term strategies for the development of their sector.

Yet tourism, as one of the biggest and fastest expanding sector, is not yet subject to a social dialogue on European Level. One of the problematic consists in the fuzzy approach of what the tourism industry really constitutes.

Several sectors, such as maritime transport, railways, hotels and restaurants (Horeca), and civil aviation have their social dialogue. These sectors, however, participate only partially in the tourism sector, they may be considered as sub-sectors to tourism.

What is and what is not part of the tourism industry is without doubt difficult to define. Talking of one specific industry seems almost impossible for the immense diversity of the sector. This complexity makes a social dialogue a difficult task to organize. Moreover, as the sectors are often only partially related to tourism, existing social dialogues might appear to be sufficient without, however, ever covering the tourism sector on its whole.

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With the aim of laying the basis for a future social dialogue for the whole of the tourism industry, the ETLC (European Trade Union Liaison Committee on Tourism) launched the present research.

Since 1995, UNI Europa, EFFAT (European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions) and ETF (European Transport Workers' Federation) are cooperating closely within the ETLC, which is a coordination platform of all trade unions representing workers in tourism.

The goal of the research is to provide an overview of the social partners in the tourism industry in the EU and evaluate their state of social dialogue and collective agreements at a national level. Furthermore, the research should bring out any activities or initiatives developed either by trade unions or by tourism companies in the 27 member states with a particular focus on sustainable tourism. Finally, recommendations on how to make sustainable tourism a theme for social dialogue will be addressed.

The report starts with a brief introduction of the general context and concepts, such as the tourism industry and sustainable development followed by a section on the different options of developing sustainable tourism programs within the employment framework, such as CSR and labels. It then explains the methodology used for the survey. The results of the survey are presented and some case studies as examples of good practice are highlighted. The report ends with recommendations for the future social dialogue of the tourism sector.

## **II. General context and concepts**

One of the aims of this research, before even considering sustainable development, is to understand the state of social dialogues and collective agreements at national level throughout Europe within the tourism industry. One difficulty consists indeed of the extremely complex tourism industry.

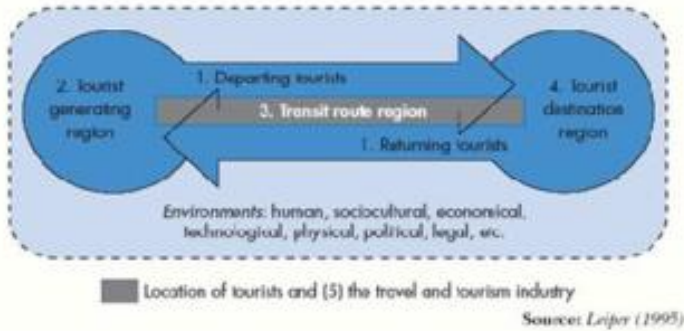
### **The tourism industry**

The term tourism industry was coined in the sixties for the service suppliers in tourism incorporate all processes of manufacturing as in the classic industries including financing, producing, managing and marketing. The tourism industry includes thus all businesses, small and medium enterprises, organisations and other resources which foster or support activities of tourists (Leiper, 2000). As the process (Figure 1) of tourism starts with the decision taking at home (tourist generating region) and ends only after the travel (tourist destination region) has been realised, all service suppliers linked to the tourism process are involved: from the travel agent and outgoing tour operator over transport, accommodation and restaurants as well as attractions and incoming local tour operators.

## Figure 1 : Leiper's system

(drawn from <http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/dsib-tour.nsf/eng/qq00135.html> (consulted 15/11/2011))

Figure 1: The Whole Basic Tourism System

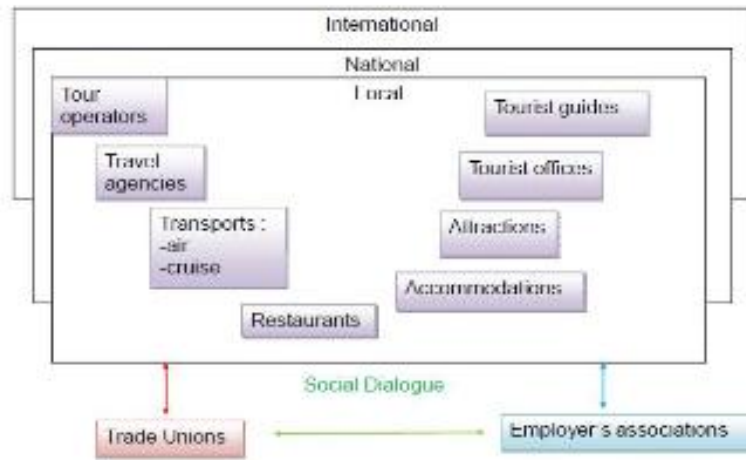


Leiper, N. (2004) *Tourism Management* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edn.) Frenchs Forest: Pearson p. 53

However, as the tourism industry is extremely multisectorial and multilayered, Leiper suggested to talk about tourism industries. While all the above mentioned businesses and organizations relate to tourism, they are often not exclusively linked to the sector. Local transport as well as the Horeca sector operate as much for visitors as for local residents. This diffusion equally exists at statistical level, as the different tourism businesses are part of different economic sectors. Consequently, there is also some scattering with regard to employment level and thus concerning trade union organisation, and it is difficult to speak of one single tourism sector.

Moreover, adding to the complexity of the different sectors is the size and the activity level of tourism businesses (Figure 2). Tourism enterprises are small family and/or businesses where workers often have difficulties to adhere to trade unions, or transnational companies represented in many different countries, where agreements between employers and employees are often company based and not based on national collective agreements.

**Figure 2 : Different levels of tourism businesses**



Considering the complexity of the tourism industry, one of the challenges of the present research was to determine, how the various tourism sub-sectors are connected to the trade unions in the different countries.

### **Sustainable tourism development**

The concept of sustainable development dates back to 1987, when the rapport of Brundtland used the term for the first time referring to *Our Common Future* (United Nations, 1987). In the report sustainable development is defined as follows:

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

It contains within it two key concepts:

- the concept of 'needs', in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs."

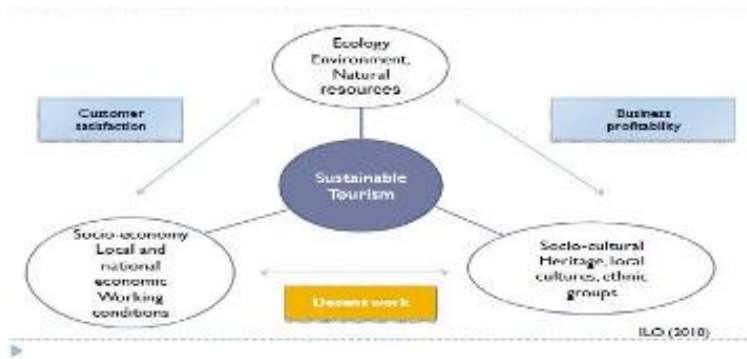
Sustainable development is based on three pillars: economic, social and environmental. It is only the combination of the three pillars that guarantees sustainable development. However, in the opinion of the general public, sustainable development is often only linked to environmental issues, such as climate change, and the other two aspects are left aside. One significant example presented later in this study are the labels in the hotel sector, referring in vast majority only to environmental considerations.

The social aspects of sustainability are in fact very close to the main objectives of the trade unions such as better working conditions and the respect of human rights beyond ILO Conventions. Indeed, social dialogue and collective bargaining are very important tools to improve social sustainability.

Sustainable tourism is a set of principles, policy prescriptions and management methods that aim at balancing the three aspects (economic, social and environmental) of tourism development.

Figure 3 shows the linkages between the three pillars. Indeed, decent working conditions have a significant influence on customer satisfaction and thus the business profitability. To achieve this, the primary resources of the tourism asset or destination need to be protected and preserved for the future.

**Figure 3 : Sustainable tourism development**



Sustainable tourism development needs thus a holistic approach by tourism stakeholders, including not only the tourism industry, but also local/regional or national authorities and destination management. Ensuring the sustainability of working conditions is the major interest of the trade unions representing tourism workers. In that perspective the ETLC charter insists on the importance of three pillars, and also on the fact that only if the social dimension is taken into account, sustainability can be achieved. Moreover, Tourism Sustainability Group (TSG) of the European Commission highlighted in their report of 2007 the 8 goals for sustainable tourism development, emphasizing again the balance between all three pillars:

- Reducing the seasonality of demand
- Addressing the impact of tourism transport
- Improving the quality of tourism jobs
- Maintaining and enhancing community prosperity and quality of life
- Minimising resource use and production of waste

- Conserving & giving value to natural/cultural heritage
- Making holidays available to all

In the tourism industry, it would be a mistake to ignore the concept of sustainable development.

Reasons are manifold:

- Firstly, resources' preservation: the tourism industry uses natural, cultural and also human resources. Their preservation is essential to gain benefit. For instance, communities have to live traditionally and perform for tourism. (Minvielle 2010).
- Secondly, the concept of sustainable development is attractive to consumers. Today, having signed a sustainable development charter or having a label attesting a concern on sustainability issues is essential for the image of tourism companies.

Several tools have been developed to integrate sustainable policies and implement sustainable development strategies in the sector. Charters, labels and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) are the most significant ones.

### **Corporate Social Responsibility**

Authors place the beginning of the concept of CSR after the Second World War, in North America with the publication of Howard R. Bowen's book, "*Social responsibility of the Businessman*", in 1953. For him, "*the 'social consciousness' of managers meant that businessmen were responsible for the consequences of their actions in a sphere somewhat wider than that covered by their profit-and-loss statements*" (Carroll 1999).

During the 60's and 70's, the definition of CSR is broadly debated and evolved from the concern on financial benefits and its discretionary aspect. The comparison of the aforementioned definition of Bowen (1953) and those of Carroll (1999) is a good example. For Carroll "*CSR involves the conduct of a business so that it is economically profitable, law abiding, ethical and socially supportive. To be socially responsible ...then means that profitability and obedience to the law are foremost conditions to discussing the firm's ethics and the extent to which it supports the society in which it exists with contributions of money , time and talent. Thus, CSR is composed of four parts: economic, legal, ethical and voluntary or philanthropic*". Furthermore, Carroll states that the economic category is the foundation. During the 80's and 90's, research focused mainly on the application of CSR in the industry.

Similarly, Minvielle asserts that CSR is a construction of liberal capitalism. In the context of the Cold War and the opposition between capitalist and socialist economies, CSR was used

to demonstrate that also capitalism had a social foundation. Moreover, with the application of CSR, enterprises decreased the risks of being regulated by the state and enhanced their image towards the outside world and kept the best employees (Minvielle, 2010).

As aforementioned, CSR comes thus originally from the employers' side. It is a voluntary and business driven process going beyond the existing legal framework (Nordestgaard, & Kirton-Darling, 2004: 7). In Europe, the concept has been reinforced beginning 2000 with Belgium being one of the pioneering countries concerning CSR (Heene et al., 2004)

In February 2002, a law has been issued, introducing 'the social label' aimed to "create a label for companies to put on their products if a company adhered to criteria and standards recognised by the International Labour Organisation (Aaronson & Reeves quoted in Heene et al, 2004). A survey led in Belgium in 2002 showed that CSR is often more customer satisfaction driven than orientated on the improving of or working on ethical values.

On the trade union side, the view on CSR is more sceptical, i.e. there is a fear that the voluntary action of CSR might conflict with collective agreements as regulation tool for working conditions and might develop into a substitute for international regulatory frameworks (Nordestgaard, & Kirton-Darling, 2004). However, there have been attempts in some sectors between trade unions and employers' associations in order to develop a common policy.

Indeed, in some European sectoral social dialogues, CSR has been taken up, notably by EFFAT. In 2004, the social partners of the Horeca sector adopted policies on CSR that suggest areas for action, beyond legal requirement, with regard to equal opportunities and non-discrimination, working conditions and work organization, fair pay, vocational training and lifelong learning, health and safety, restructuring and relationships between social partners. (European Commission, 2010: 42). Integrating CSR in the social dialogue means framing it and not replacing social dialogues by CSR.

In a new communication (COM (2011) 681 final), the European Commission "*puts forward a new definition of CSR as 'the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society', respect for applicable legislation, and for collective agreements between social partners, is a prerequisite for meeting that responsibility. To fully meet their corporate social responsibility, enterprises should have in place a process to integrate social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into their business operations and core strategy in close collaboration with their stakeholders.*"

According to these principles, CSR has a multidimensional nature. Social aspects of CSR include human rights, labour and employment practices (training, diversity, gender equality and employee

health and well-being. All these points constitute the core of social dialogues and collective agreements.

## **Labels**

Today, there are a lot of labels in the tourism industry and it is very difficult for consumers as well as for stakeholders to understand and choose specific labels. According to Xavier Font (2002), the first labels were created in the 80s and their number increased rapidly during the 90s in response to an increasing demand for greater visibility of companies' engagement with sustainable development issues. One of the main reasons to create a label is to ensure sustainable development. The other reason is related to commercial developments. Indeed, on one hand labels are a very important tool for branding, and on the other hand, they also contribute to reducing costs. For instance, promoting to restrain washing towels every day reduces in a significant way the water and washing powder consumption.

Most of the labels focus specifically on environmental aspects of sustainability “*somehow reflecting the priorities of the 80s and 90s echoed in the 1992 Earth Summit.*” Moreover, the majority of labels is created in Europe where green considerations are very important (Font 2004). However, during the early years in 2000, labels developed a more holistic approach of sustainability “*while environment has been the softer target within sustainability, society is slowly embracing the full meaning of sustainability reflected at international events such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the World Ecotourism Summit, both in 2002*”.

Labels include thus the three pillars, but in different proportions for the social and economic aspects which are generally much less developed. In the requirements for most labels, social standards are limited to ILO Conventions' standards. Moreover, when social aspects are integrated in the labels they concern, particularly in developing countries, the well-being of surrounding communities and not the staff working conditions (Font, 2004). The reason for this situation is that most labels are created in European countries where basic social needs are covered by legislation.

### **III. The survey amongst the trade unions**

Although the contracting organisations have member organisations all over Europe, there is to date no overview of social dialogues, collective agreements and sustainability actions lead by trade unions in the various countries. Furthermore, in each country trade unions are differently organised following national specificities. Some countries have sector based trade unions (e.g. Germany,



Austria), in other countries the trade unions are linked to political parties or orientations and consequently one sector can be represented by different trade unions (e.g. Belgium, Italy).

In order to identify the current situation, the research team, together with the project steering committee, opted for a quantitative survey addressing all members of the contracting organisations.

One aim of the survey was the mapping of:

1. existing and ongoing social dialogues and collective agreements within the responding countries
2. discussions and actions involving trade unions related to sustainable tourism development

## **Methodology**

The first step of the survey was to clarify which sectors are deemed to be part of the tourism industry. After discussions with the project steering committee, 7 sectors were retained (travel agencies and tour operators, sea and coastal passenger transport; water transport; air passenger transport; rail passenger transport; coaches; hotels and restaurants) providing respondents with the possibility of adding other sectors. Moreover, respondents were asked for each of the concerned sector to indicate whether they had social dialogues, collective agreements and sustainability debates and/or actions going on.

In May 2011, UNI Europa, EFFAT and ETF sent the survey via email to all their member organizations organizing tourism workers. A first reminder was sent in July and a second one in August 2011.

All in all, 27 trade unions replied, from 18 different countries out of 30 countries that are member in the 3 organisations. While the responding sample represents more than 50% of the countries, the exact number of organisations who received the questionnaire is unknown (Map 1). It should be noted, however, that several respondents only filled in the questionnaire very partially, making the information difficult to use.

The following maps reflect the received responses and therefore are an indication but not an exhaustive representation of the reality.

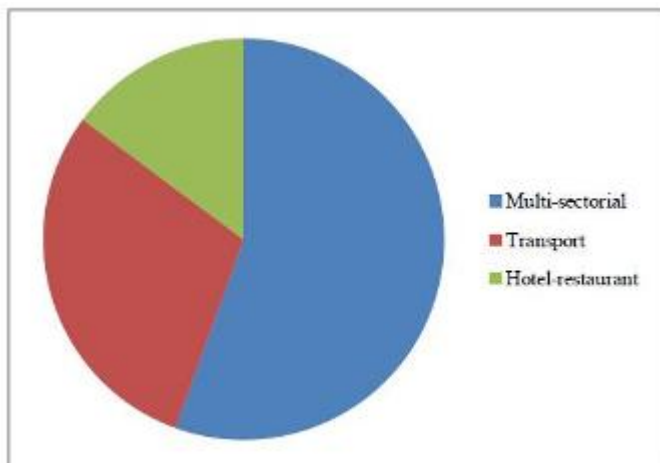
## Map 1 : Responses of trade unions



### The results

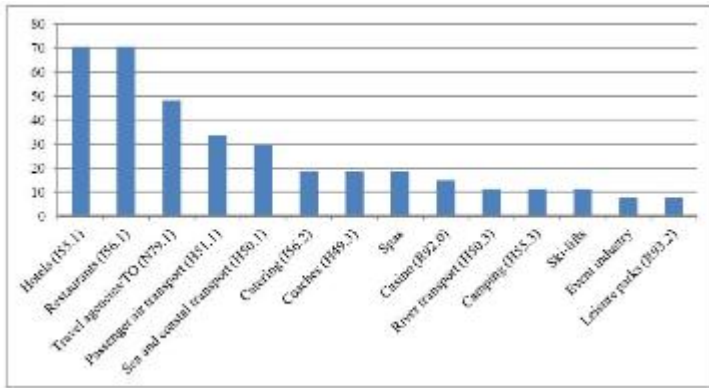
The first question of the survey aims at understanding whom the trade unions in the different countries represent. In our sample, 8 trade unions are specifically dealing with transport workers (air, rail, water), 4 with hotel and restaurant workers, and 15 others are multi-sectoral. Multisectoral trade unions cover either all tourism sectors (the case of Italy) or a combination of several subsectors, such as hotel, restaurant and catering (Fig. 4). The range of possibilities is very varied and specific to each State.

Figure 4 : Survey - Repartition of trade unions



The most represented sectors by trade unions are the hotel and restaurant industry, represented by 70% of sample (Figure 5). The second largest group consists of workers of travel agencies and tour operators (48%), followed by passenger air transport (33%), sea and coastal transport (29%) and workers of catering, coaches and spa sectors (each with 18.5%).

**Figure 5 : Representativity of sectors**



Data show that some sectors are under-represented or not represented at all by trade unions (for example tourist guides). Several reasons can be found: freelance status, difficulties in connecting with trade unions or no specific categories.

However, it should be stressed that the definition of social dialogue may vary at national level. It's one of the findings of this survey: a collective agreement is not necessary preceded by a social dialogue and in some countries there are no social dialogues at all.

On the other hand, many workers are not represented by trade unions due to the important number of SMEs and family enterprises in the tourism industry.

The answers confirm and illustrate perfectly the complexity of the tourism industry, the diversity and the challenges for trade unions and workers.

### **Social dialogue and collective agreements**

A report of the European Commission (2010) states that, at present, 36 sectoral social dialogue committees exist at European level. Among them, only 2 are related to the tourism industry (civilaviation and Horeca sectors) and 2 are partially related (maritime transport and railway sectors).

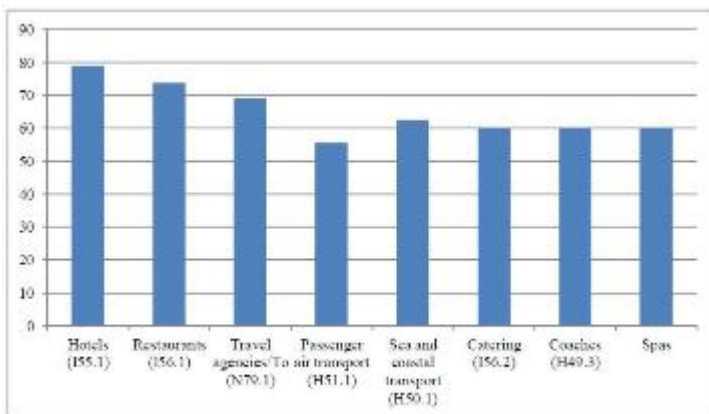
In our survey, at national level 19 trade unions declared that they have a social dialogue (Map 2), 3 replied no (but these have a collective agreement) and 4 by 'yes and no'. This means that these trade unions have an ongoing social dialogue for one of several sectors that they cover, but not for the totality. Trade unions have established dialogue with three specific partners:

- national federations of employers/Chambers of Commerce
- private enterprises
- European associations

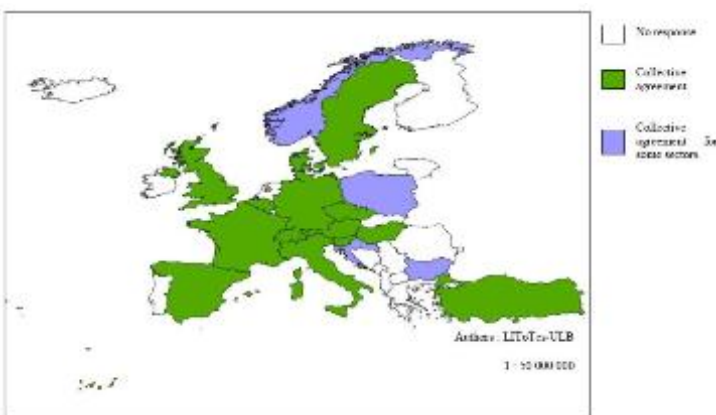
12 trade unions are having a social dialogue between national employers' federations or Chambers. Two trade unions conduct social dialogue with national federation and private enterprises. At last, only one trade union declared to have an on-going dialogue at European level.

The responses of the survey allowed calculating by sectors the percentage of trade unions with an established social dialogue<sup>3</sup> (Figure 6). Except for passenger air transport, the sectors have an equal or superior rate of 60%.

**Figure 6 : Social dialogue by sectors**



**Map 2 : Collective agreements for the tourism sector at national level**



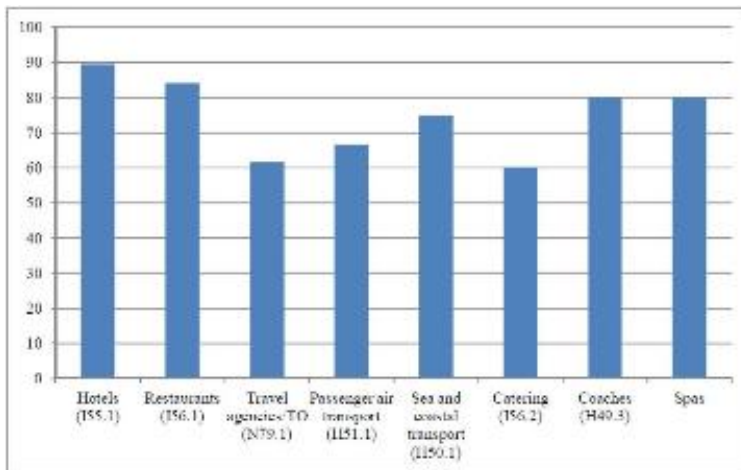
All respondent trade unions have collective agreements (Map 2), but:

- For some of them, not all the sectors they represent have a collective agreement. For example, in the case of STUH, tour operators, travel agencies, hotel and restaurant workers have a collective agreement, but not the workers in the catering industry.
- In the case of POKREPA and SEV, collective agreements have been established with private enterprises and not with national federations.

The same calculations are made for collective agreements by sectors4:

- 90% of trade unions that represent hotel workers have a collective agreement.
- The rate is of 84% for the restaurant sector, 80% for coaches and the spa sector.
- At last, a rate of 75% for the sea and coastal transport sector, 66% for passenger air transport, 60% for travel agencies/tour operators and catering sectors.

**Figure 7 : Collective agreements by sectors**



Results show that social dialogues and collective agreements are not present in all countries and for all sectors of the tourism industry. It should be interesting to follow the evolution of their implementation.

Most significantly, the contents of social dialogues and collective agreements are very different depending on the country or the sector: The analysis of the replies highlights the great diversity and the complexity of the tourism industry. Workers in different sectors do not enjoy the same working conditions: for example, for VER.DI one of the key issues of the current debate is the establishment of a minimum wage in Germany.

In this context, it may be interesting to compare the contents of collective agreements. This comparison would examine all aspects related to sustainable development (status of workers,

salary, minimum wage, extra hours, training, discrimination...)

### Discussions and actions about sustainable development

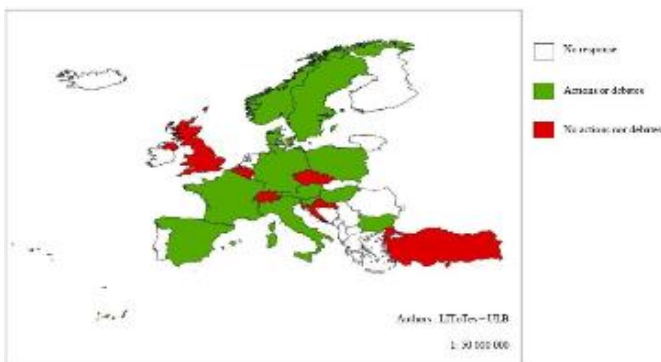
The second aim of the survey was to provide an overview of ongoing debates and actions related to sustainable development that are realised by trade unions. Results show a range of different situations for European countries: differences of the concerned sectors and of definitions of ‘sustainability’.

19 trade unions have ongoing discussions on sustainable development. Among these trade unions, 11 have actions. Unfortunately, respondents often do not explain the contents of the debates or actions. For the analysis, debates and actions have been treated together, because the lack of explanations by the responding trade unions show confusion / lack of precision between both.

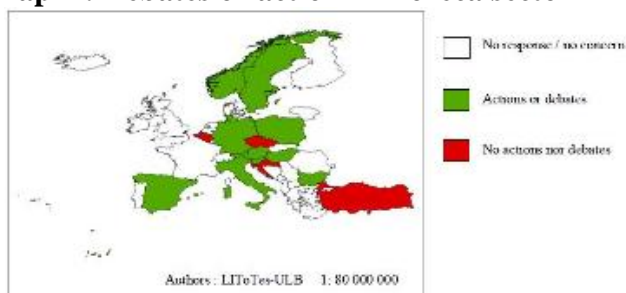
Map 3 shows where debates or actions are realised. This map is very ‘optimistic’: if one trade union in a country declares to have a discussion or an action for one sector of the tourism industry, we say that the debate exists.

We provide the same map for the three most represented sectors (Horeca, transport, tour operators and travel agencies).The results point out different situations (Map 4.5 and 6).

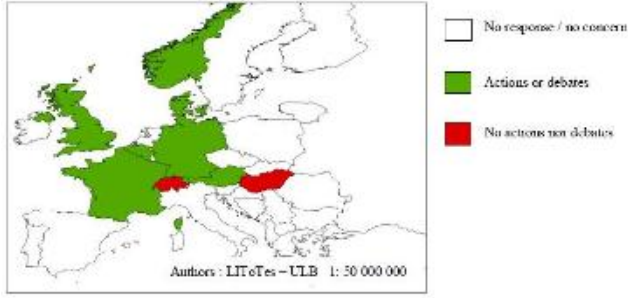
### Map 3 : Debates and actions on sustainable development



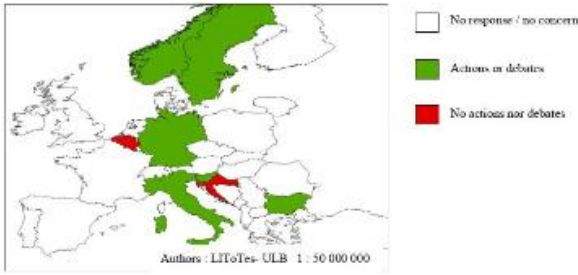
### Map 4 : Debates or action in Horeca sector



### Map 5 : Debates or actions in transports sector



### Map 6 : Debates or actions in the tour operators and travel agencies sector



According to the replies, debates and actions for sustainable development exist:

- At different levels (national, European or international)
- With different stakeholders (private enterprises, government, international federations, NGOs, ...)

Amongst the examples cited by the trade unions, we find : social tourism, whales protection, detection of market needs, biodiversity preservation, climate protection, international women day, struggle against child prostitution, improvement of working conditions, minimum wages, negotiate collective agreements, ...

The answers of the respondents stress the great diversity of projects in terms of contents, but they also highlight the lack of clear definition of what sustainable development eventually means for trade unions.

### IV. Case studies

The second aim of the research was to collect examples of good practice of actions in sustainable development taken by trade unions.

## **Methodology:**

Trade unions were asked in the survey to give examples of sustainability actions. The most interesting actions were then selected, in agreement with the project steering committee. In order to obtain more in-depth information, the people in charge of the actions were contacted and websites and other information material were analysed. Key issues were to learn more about the involved partners, the history and length of the actions, their geographical context and practical aspects.

## **The results:**

Sustainable development is an underlying issue in all collective bargaining, social dialogues and collective agreements. The aim of any of these is to make working conditions sustainable and acceptable for workers and employers. However, since the importance of sustainable development is increasingly acknowledged, trade unions have adopted programmes and instigated initiatives concerning sustainable development.

The existing projects can be divided into several groups:

- a) Sustainability initiatives in the trade union's home country
- b) Sustainability initiatives at destinations
- c) Cross-border initiatives and reflections

### **a) Sustainability initiatives in the trade union's home country**

In many countries initiatives related to sustainable development have been launched. While in some countries they concern the hotel sector, other countries opted for improving the workers' skills.

In some countries trade unions have signed up to use sustainable accommodation. In Austria, for instance, the trade union VIDA provides a list to all their members with accommodations having a sustainability policy related to environmental and social aspects. In Ireland, trade unions launched the campaign 'Fair Hotels' in May 2010. This campaign promotes hotels that were proposed by their own staff and staff representatives. While the campaign wants to promote quality employment in the hotel industry in Ireland, it also addresses the 'ethical client'.

A FAIR Hotels Expo will take place at the Liberty Hall Theatre in Dublin next month. The 13th April event gives Fair Hotels a chance to showcase its conference product to conference organisers. A total of 55 unions and 33 non-governmental bodies have already endorsed the Fair Hotels ethical trade mark.



And in advance of the Expo, Fair Hotels have written to all large conference hotels inviting them to join in the campaign. Over the next three years, Irish trade unions will stage 78 conferences, involving 9,150 delegates and totalling 51,075 bed nights.

Unions organise delegate conferences because these are how unions make all of their important decisions.

Now, unions have come together under the aegis of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to agree a combined purchasing policy whereby all future business will be booked through hotels have signed up to the Fair Hotels principles. This makes Irish trade unions the biggest purchaser of conferences across Ireland and is certainly a major factor in the growing number of facilities that have signed up to the Fair Hotels code of ethics.

The Fair Hotels website – [www.fairhotels.ie](http://www.fairhotels.ie)– has seen a 20% increase in membership in the last 12 months, making it a major success story in a market that is still under severe pressure as a result of the downturn. Ethel Buckley, of SIPTU’s Strategic Organising Department, outlined the steps that hotels seeking a slice of this lucrative business need to take. She said: “Essentially hotels need to take three simple steps to qualify. “Firstly, they sign the Fair Hotels agreement which provides for recognition of SIPTU for collective bargaining. “Secondly, they give a commitment that the hotel will be neutral on staff joining the union.”

“Thirdly, they provide a list of all employees and access for organisers from the Strategic Organising Department to meet with staff. It really couldn’t be simpler.” SIPTU Sector Organiser Pat Ward added; “This Expo really is a prime opportunity for hotels to pick up conference business over the coming 12 months.

“We’re looking forward to having a really busy and productive day for all of the hotels that have signed up to the Fair Hotels principles.”

(<http://www.siptu.ie/bulletin/pdf/1301311164LibertyMarchFInal.pdf>)

In Spain, FECOHT-CCOO and FECHTJ-UGT are involved in the IMSERSO project. It is a social tourism programme that started in 2003 and helps seniors to go on holidays during low season. This consequently helps the local economy to benefit throughout the year and being less dependent on the tourism season. All accommodations of this project must fulfil some specific requirements related to sustainable management with a particular focus on working conditions. This project is a good example as it highlights actions that could be achieved by trade unions. Indeed, trade unions are an important player for social tourism in Europe for they connect the right for tourism for all (challenge 7 of the TSG) and better working conditions in tourism (challenge 3 of the TSG). In

sustaining and coordinating (in some countries) social tourism, the trade unions contribute to sustainable tourism development.

Another example from Sweden is an initiative of developing skills. This initiative is based on BASICON, the European-wide basic qualification project in building professions (<http://www.basicon.org/cms/index/362/>). The aim is to lower precarious employment and develop qualified workers in hotels and restaurants. At present, the program focuses on cooks.

A similar project concerning qualifications and skills of workers is coordinated by PODKREPA in Bulgaria. Together with the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Labour, the trade union participates in the job mapping and the development of long term tourism strategies. One aim of this project is to evaluate the future needs for qualified and skilled worker force and to develop vision for the key competences for the next ten years.

#### **b) Sustainability initiatives at destinations**

Generally, the destinations are in developing countries and initiatives are done in partnership between trade unions, NGOs, governmental agencies, etc.

Some trade unions, e.g. in Sweden and Germany, collaborate with NGOs and other organizations to improve working conditions in destination countries. Initiatives were launched over the last 5 years in response to the development of all-inclusive travel, and to complement the promotion of tour operators based on environmental sustainable aspects.

One example is the Swedish initiative and network 'Fair travel. It is a network of six organisations: ECPAT, Fair Trade Center, the Swedish Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union HRF, the church of Sweden and the IOGT-NTO movement (an organization battling for the reduction of alcohol and drugs consumption). ” *We believe that tourism can be a force for development in many countries – but that will require the travel industry to assume greater responsibility for sustainable travel, taking account of the social, ethical, economic and environmental effects*”.

The network was launched in 2008 with the aim to address mainly the negative impacts of all inclusive travel and inform the potential travellers to these destinations. Focus is on the deteriorating working conditions and the leakage of local benefit. Indeed, particularly in the all inclusive supply, most of the money goes to the TOs and foreign companies leaving very little income for the local workers and the local economy (food import; less employees due to buffets etc. While 'Fair Travel' believes that tourism is a good development tool, they wish employers to follow the OECD guidelines and attract attention through the media for responsible travel.

To reach these aims 'Fait travel' works with tour operators to improve working conditions and to inform tourists. The network produces information material, training materials, reports and organises seminar. The document '*Recommendations to tour operators*'<sup>5</sup> insists on local economic development, working conditions, prostitution and child sex tourism, alcohol and drugs consumption, environment and territorial conflict.

A second example is the implication of Italian trade unions (FILCAMS-CGIL, FISASCATCISL, UILTuCS-UIL) and the employers' association (FIAVET) in the ECPAT project<sup>6</sup>. This 5 <http://www.schystresande.se/upl/files/42921.pdf>

<sup>6</sup><http://www.ecpat.net/EI/index.asp> (consulted 15/11/2011). initiative campaigns against child prostitution, pornography and sexual traffic. Italian trade unions took part in the construction of the Code of conduct for the protection of children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism. Moreover, they raise awareness amongst their members about this question, mainly tour operators' and travel agencies' workers. Workers are hence expected to inform tourists.

The third example is a private initiative, the ABTA Travelife project. It is an example for a tour operators' initiative on sustainable development. Travelife proposes a rating system for accommodation establishments (bronze, silver and gold award) based on specific requirements determined by Travelife Partners. The initiative was presented at the ETLC Conference in Rome on 24-25 October 2011. The presentation showed that the emphasis is on environmental criteria, and that social rights are reduced to ILO Conventions. The reaction of the Travelife representative to the questions after the presentation was not very convincing that this project can contribute to the improvement of working conditions. There has neither been an implication of trade unions in the writing of the requirements, nor is there a participation in the control of the criteria. It is indeed a private initiative to brand the image of accommodation businesses.

### c) **Cross-border initiatives and reflections**

In order to highlight international initiatives, the EU co-financed TRUST project<sup>7</sup> launched by ETF in 2007 appears to be a good example for a cross-border initiative.

TRUST is intended to:

- *Demonstrate the need for various EU institutions to integrate a social dimension in transport policies;*
- *Highlight the importance of the "employment pillar" of the Lisbon Strategy: more and better jobs;*

- *Stress the need for appropriate ex-ante and ex-post (social) impact assessments of restructuring processes;*
- *Mainstream gender-equality issues across a discussion on sustainability.*
- *Find a better balance between transport and environmental concerns;*
- *Highlight contradictions in unsustainable transport demand growth trends.*

A first step of this project was the construction of a common definition for all ETF members:

*What is “sustainable transport”?*

*From a trade union perspective the concept of sustainable development means creating the conditions for economic growth, whilst ensuring fair working conditions and quality jobs in a socially responsible industry which, at the same time, does not harm the environment.*

*A sustainable transport system has to meet the different functions of transport whilst respecting all three pillars of sustainability: social, sustainability, environmental sustainability and economic sustainability, as set out in the Lisbon Strategy.*

<http://www.itfglobal.org/etf/trust.cfm> (consulted 15/11/2011)

*Social sustainability from a trade union perspective means:*

- *That transport fulfils its function for social inclusion and participation. This includes regional and local planning in order to provide adequate, quality infrastructure and services; ensuring public services for access to mobility and social inclusion.*
- *That transport industry itself is socially sustainable. The transport industry must provide safe and secure high quality jobs in decent working conditions, and without social dumping? This is a pre-condition for the delivery of high quality services for businesses and people. Sustainability in this wider sense requires an active and highly integrated policy that places the societal role to transport in the forefront: integration of regional, financial, social, economic and environmental policies.*

*However, it might be an illusion to believe that in transport it is possible to place economic sustainability (competitiveness of the Europe transport industry) on the same level as environmental and social sustainability. The necessary consequence of this would be to re-think and to re-evaluate the liberalisation of transport markets in the light of its impact on sustainability and*

*the reversal of liberalisation where it has contributed to worsening sustainability indicators, especially in the field of social and ecological sustainability.” (ETF)*

This project represents the 3 pillars of sustainable development with a particular focus on social aspects. The new economic models of flexibility are a core challenge for the workers in transport.

However, when it comes to promoting the project, the environmental aspects of sustainable development are put forward, as the transport sector is generally pointed at for its environmental impact and hardly for social considerations.

TRUST is particularly interesting for:

- Reflections about sustainable development and transport that could be transposed and adapted for the tourism industry.
- There is a reflection on the definition of sustainable development. The definition is the work of trade unions and thus it contains social aspects.
- The definition bonds sustainable development and traditional trade union work. It proves the utility of trade unions in this discussion.

## **VI. Conclusions and recommendations**

The aim of this research was to understand the state of social dialogues and collective agreements at national level within the tourism industry throughout Europe, and to examine the integration of sustainability debates or actions in the trade union work.

The mapping of social dialogues and collective agreements highlights the differences between countries, but also between the sectors of the tourism industry. Moreover, the survey shows that not all sectors are represented equitably, e.g. tourist guides and tourist attraction workers. This complexity points to the difficulty of covering the entire sector when engaging in a European social dialogue for the tourism industry, and it emphasises the need to have workers from all subsectors of the tourism industry organised in trade unions.

The follow-up of the national developments in social dialogue and collective bargaining is therefore of great interest, particularly in the current crisis where governments question or suspend collective agreements.

Sustainable development is not yet entirely integrated in the traditional trade union work.

Nevertheless, sustainable development is a very topical challenge that needs to be integrated in the European social dialogue:

- Firstly, its social aspect is very close to the objectives pursued by trade union work. The reflections of ETF and the Tourism Sustainability Group prove that the concept matches perfectly with trade unions' concerns.
- Secondly, private enterprises have already integrated the concept of sustainable tourism development. To talk to each other as equals, trade unions must have their own definition and their own aims.

In order to realize these two points, the setting up of a European Tourism Observatory and the common definition of sustainable development in tourism are essential.

The drafting of a common definition could be directed by ETLC (as suggested in the conference).

This process should integrate trade unions of all European countries and represent all sectors of the tourism industry. This definition should lead to common goals and a common action plan.

The ETLC's "European Trade Union Charter on Tourism" is a good departure to actions.

Furthermore, an observatory of the development of social dialogue and collective agreements as well as sustainability actions appears to be useful tool for the future. The observatory should integrate national and European experiences.

The survey brought up several issues that would be interesting to monitor in the future:

- The difference between the sectors of the tourism industry.
- An in-depth description of the contents and developments of social dialogue and collective agreements.
- Debates and actions on sustainable development, detailed in the context of a common definition.
- The participation in EWCs
- The contents of agreements between enterprises and workers, particularly important in the European context.

Concretely, a survey should be

- realized once a year
- with the participation of all trade unions
- with consistency in the questions, to facilitate the monitoring of evolutions by countries and by sectors

- completed by national and European trade unions and EWCs

Another objective for an observatory could be the follow-up of company initiatives. This knowledge is important for the discussion with enterprises and employers' associations, and for the monitoring of the evolution of working conditions.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the development of a sustainable tourism industry lies to a great extent in the hands of trade unions. Providing workers throughout Europe with fair and sustainable working conditions is the role of the European social dialogue. However, some debates need to be undertaken on who represents whom in the sector and on the definition of sustainable development, in order to make the European social dialogue a successful tool for the entire sector.

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## VIII. Annexe

### Annex1 : List of respondents

Country	Trade Union
Austria	VERB
Belgium	ACTE / VIBES/COOP ACTE / ILM / NAX
Netherlands	WOLFFEN FUTU
Denmark	STU 39
Czech Republic	COOP/ICF
Denmark	Højbjergvej RPS/ICF
France	UNSA-CGT
France	MOA
Germany	VERB
Hungary	MEZK CSZ
Ireland	ETUC/CAI
Italy	ETUC/IFP
Lithuania	
Netherlands	
Spain	
Montenegro	
Norway	FORSKNINGSSEKT Norskagruppa, NORGELUBEN
Poland	MOZP Solidarnosc
Portugal	
Romania	
Serbia	
Slovakia	
Slovenia	SOVS
Spain	PSCH/MAIST EDUCETT-CCOO
Sweden	STY
Sweden	IF/IF/IKN IFP
Switzerland	SNV
Turkey	TE-SEK
United Kingdom	MAUTELUS