

# “How can social dialogue be a game changer?”

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# Introduction

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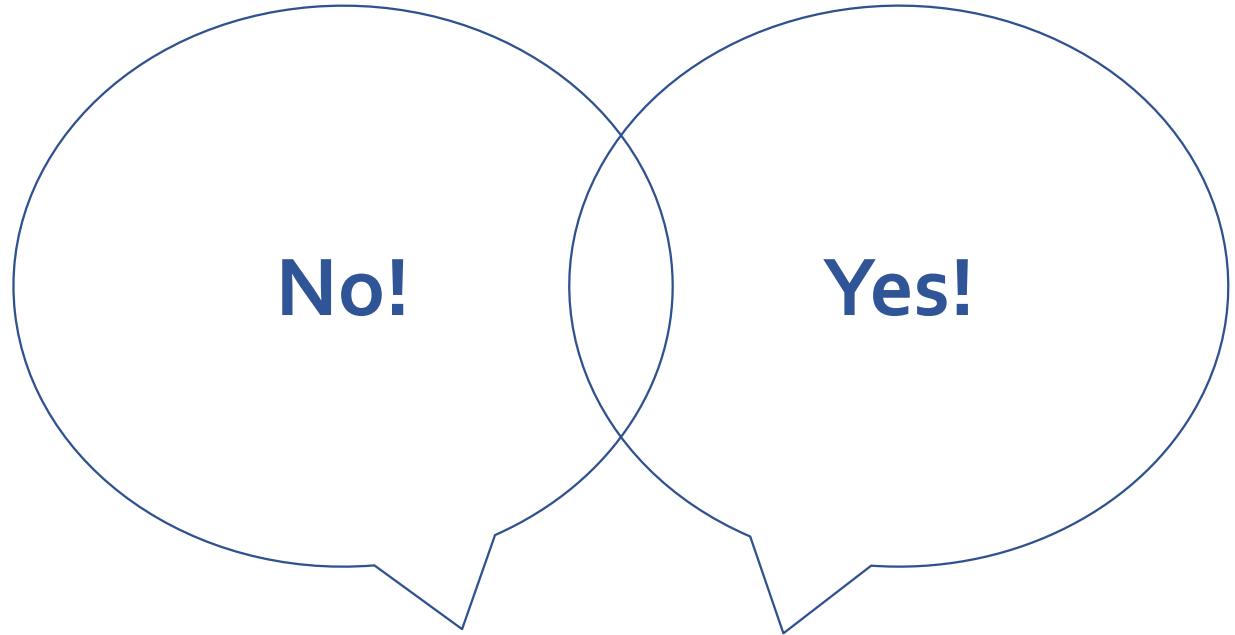
Can social dialogue be a game changer?

How can social dialogue be a game changer?

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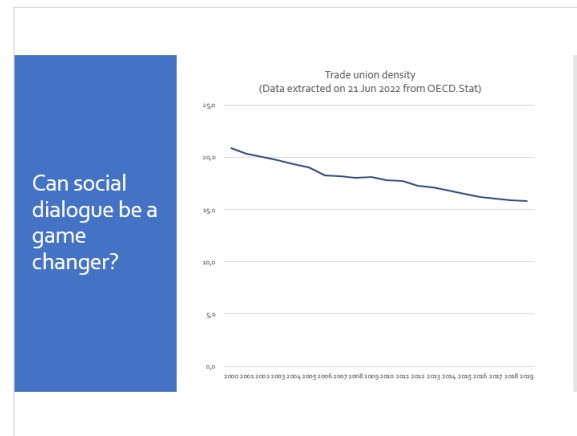
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# Can social dialogue be a game changer?

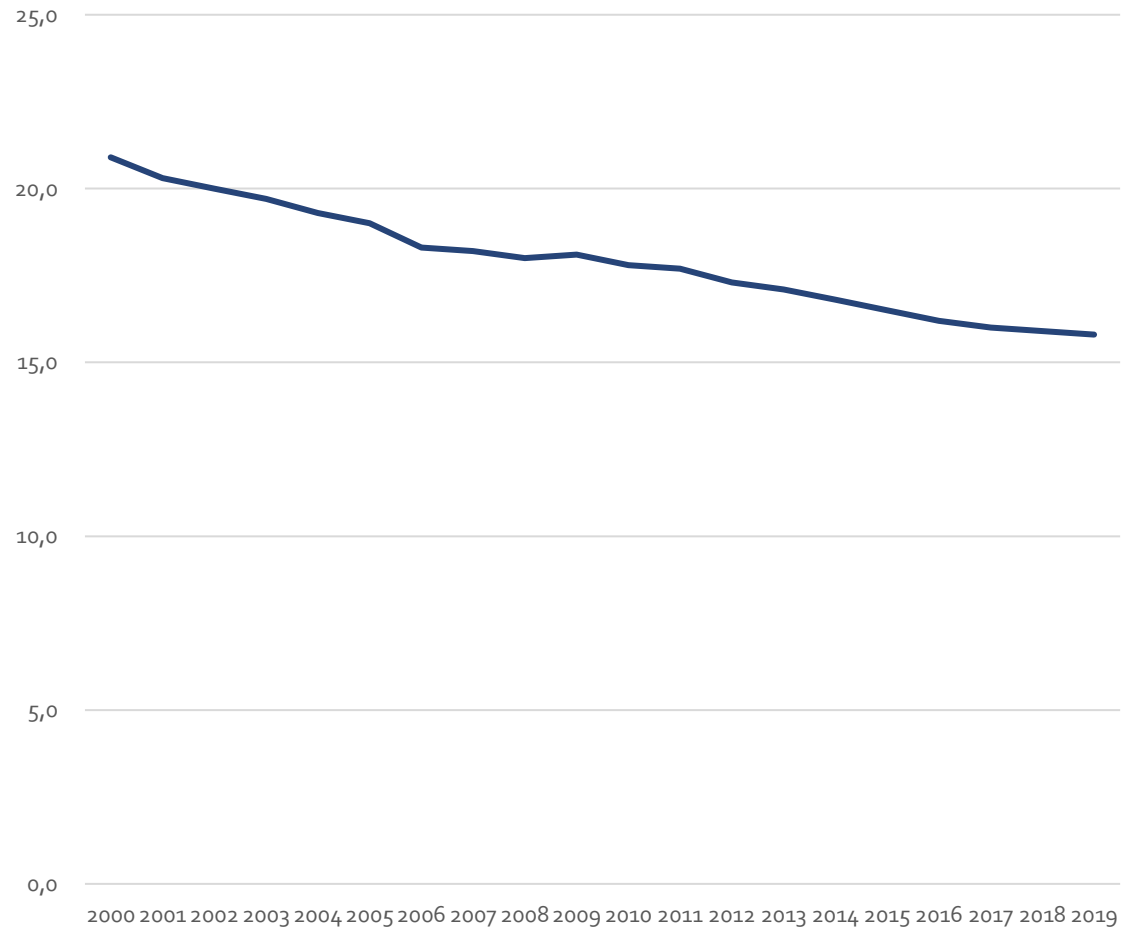


- Decline of trade union membership
- Cross-national trends, beyond reach of national systems of industrial relations
- Role and power of large private-owned firms
- Crisis of representative democracy
- ...



Can social  
dialogue be a  
game  
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Trade union density  
(Data extracted on 21 Jun 2022 from OECD.Stat)



# Can social dialogue be a game changer?

- Persistence of institutions of industrial relations
- New strategies
- Political support
  - European Pillar of Social Rights
    - Key role of social dialogue and social partners
- Renewed role in the current context



**Yes!**

## Can social dialogue be a game changer?

*"...there are some positive signs: unions representing specific occupations, such as school teachers, nurses and airline pilots, have retained high levels of density; and union confederations in many parts of Europe have launched successful general strikes against unpopular government reforms to pensions and welfare benefits. Unions need to position themselves as agencies that can help deal with the growing problems of wage stagnation, low wages, income inequality and insufficient economic demand."*

Kelly 2015



# Can social dialogue be a game changer?

- ILO (2022)
  - Study of 21 countries from different regions of the world
    - Analysis of 500 collective agreements signed between January 2020 and December 2021
    - Survey, interviews and secondary sources

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ILO (2022),  
Contribution  
of collective  
bargaining  
to an  
inclusive,  
sustainable  
and resilient  
recovery

Adaptation of collective bargaining practices to the COVID-19 pandemic context

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Measures to secure the continuity of services

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Measures to ensure safe and healthy workplaces, for both on-site and remote work

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Safeguard business continuity, retaining skills and know-how, preserving employment and protecting earnings

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Shape future work practices, such as decent telework and inclusive models of hybrid work

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# Can social dialogue be a game changer?

- Degryse 2021
  - Study of role played by the European social dialogue during the pandemic

*"In contrast to the 2008 crisis, the Covid crisis has provided evidence of the vital nature of social dialogue, good working conditions and employment support measures."*

Degryse (2021: 98)

• Degryse 2021  
• Study of role played by the European social dialogue during the pandemic

Table 29 Education – one joint 'Covid' text in 2020

Date	Title	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
26/06/2020	Joint ETUCE/EFEE Statement on the impact of the Covid 19 crisis on sustainable education systems at times of crisis and beyond	Strengthen social dialogue at all levels; recognise the additional burdens taken on by education personnel.	Provide means of safeguarding health and safety at work (equipment, training, strategies); support investment in infrastructure.	Promote supportive working environments and prepare strategies for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds or vulnerable groups; develop a strategic approach to digitising education.

Degryse 2021: 81

- Degryse 2021
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Yes !

*Yes ! But how?*

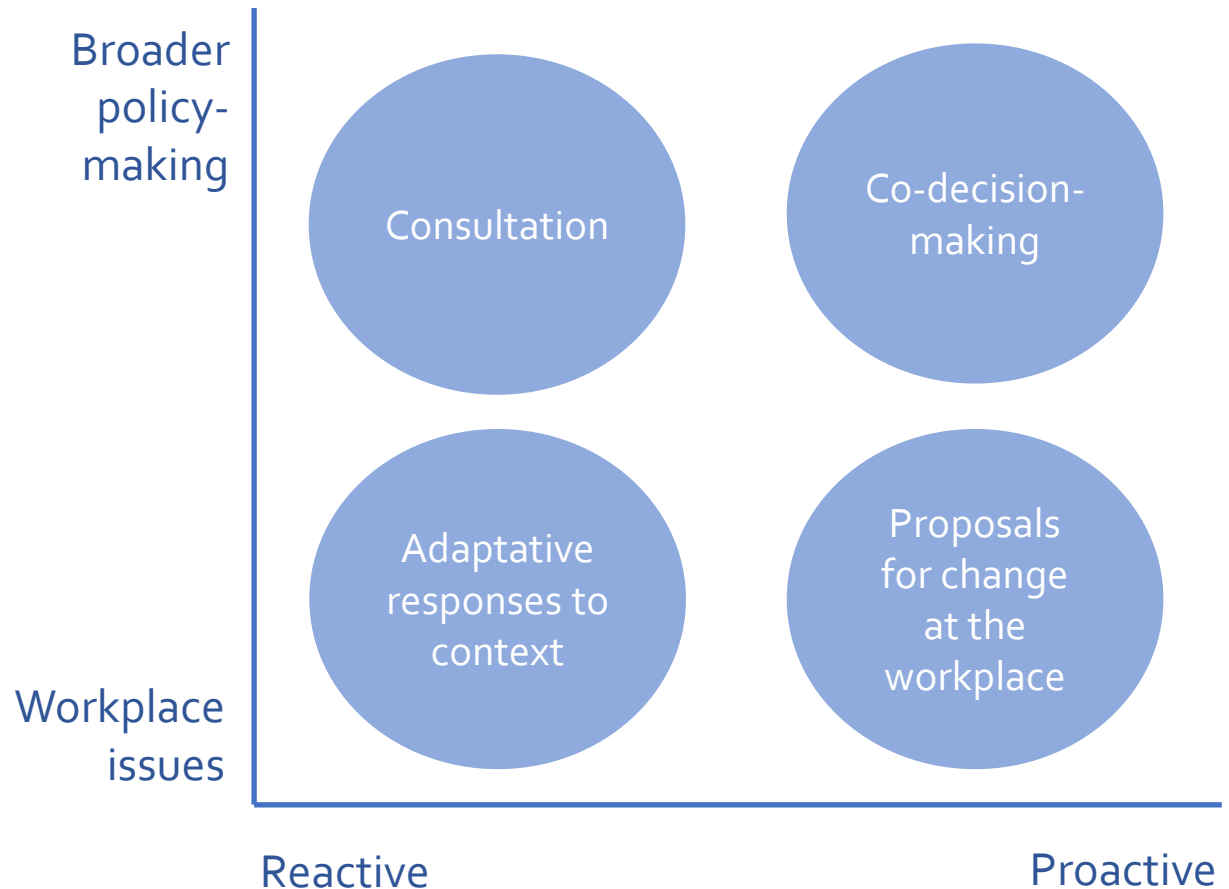
# How can social dialogue be a game changer?



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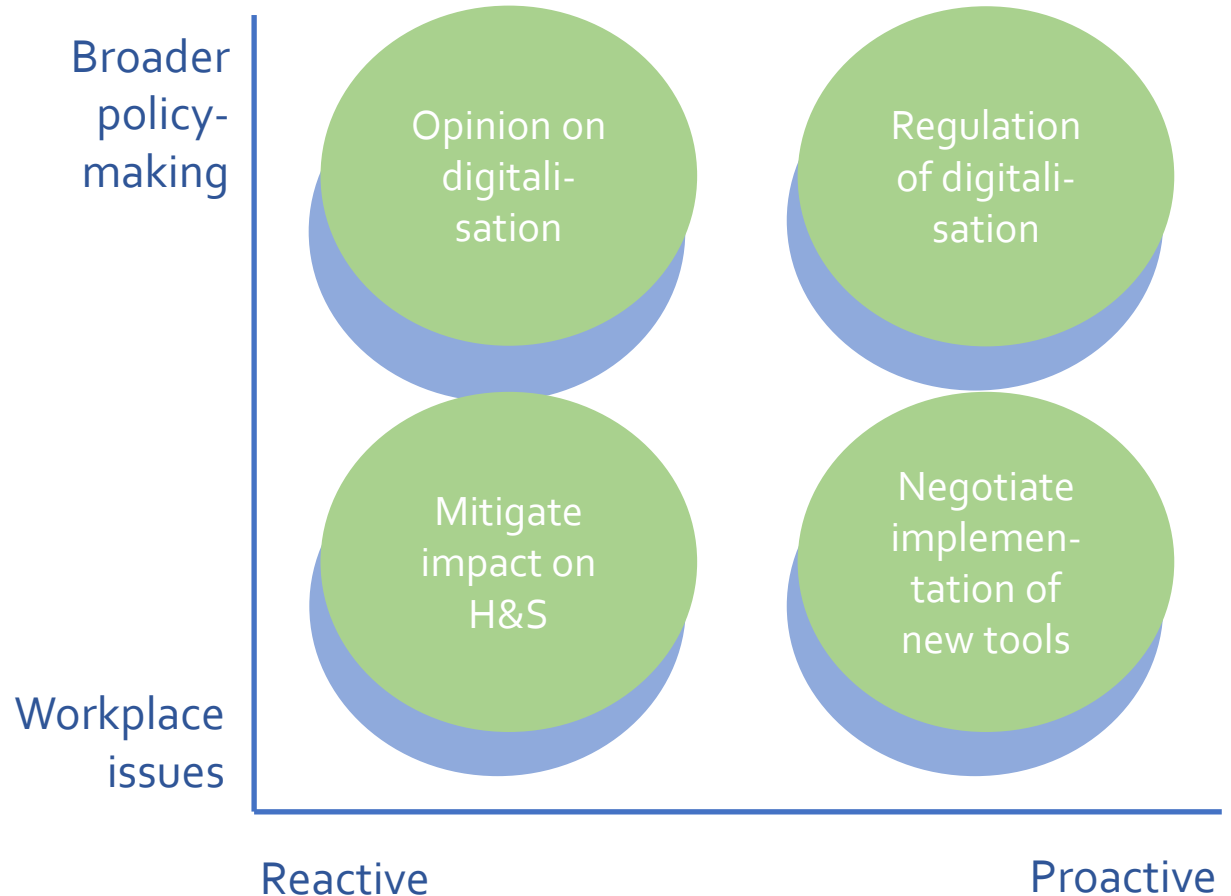
- In a variety of ways!
- Opportunity for innovation / experimentation

# How can social dialogue be a game changer?



# How can social dialogue be a game changer?

- Example : digitalisation



# How can social dialogue be a game changer?

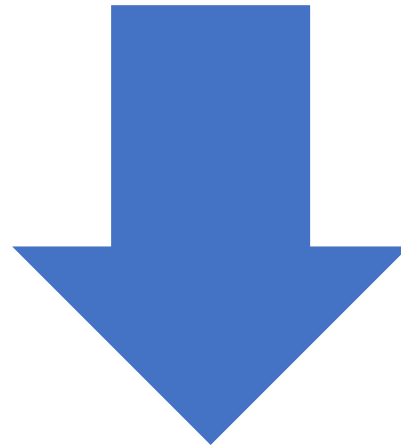
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*« while collective bargaining can contribute to an inclusive, sustainable and resilient recovery, the magnitude and direction of this contribution depend very much on the institutional context and support given to collective bargaining. »*

(ILO 2022: 139).



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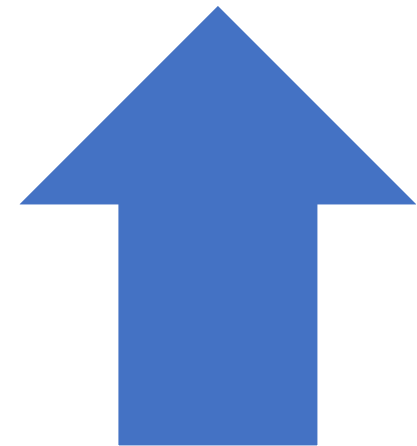
## Institutional path dependency

- National institutions
- Limited capacity
- Diversity of interests
- Lack of political support



## Institutional innovation for an inclusive and sustainable society

- Digitalisation & climate change
- Rise of inequalities
- Health & safety
- Political support



# Conclusion

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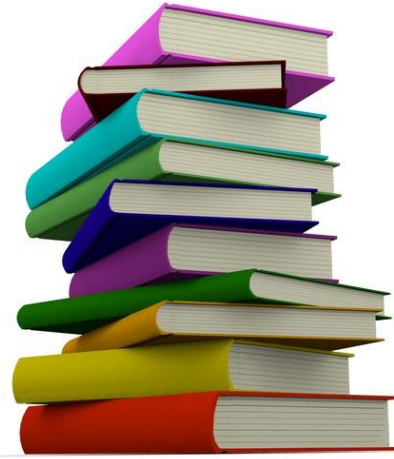
*Yes! But...*

How can social dialogue be a game changer?

*Transition = risk & opportunity for institutional innovation*



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# References

## References

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