



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Dynamics of the European Sectoral Social Dialogue

**The role of social partners in CVT in Europe:
reviewing practices and sharing challenges**

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Outline

- I. Analytical framework**
- II. Institutional developments**
- III. Coordination of a multi-level governance**
- IV. Implementation of texts**
- V. Conclusions**



I. Analytical framework

- **2 levels of analysis**
 - ▶ **European institutions and actors**
 - **participants + interaction with the European Commission**
 - ▶ **relationship with the Member States**



I. Research questions

- **recent developments in the ESSD**
- **how do players act and interact**
 - ▶ **within ESSD committees**
 - ▶ **with national constituencies**
- **implementation of texts**



I. Methodology

- **combination of methods**
 - ▶ **documentary search**
 - ▶ **databases (OSE)**
 - ▶ **‘representativeness studies’**
 - ▶ **interviews**
 - **45 semi-structured interviews**



II. Institutional developments

- 36 committees
 - ▶ with increasing visibility

36 Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees

- Agriculture
- Audiovisual
- Banking
- Catering
- Chemical industry
- Civil aviation
- Cleaning Industry
- Commerce
- Construction
- Electricity
- Extractive Industry
- Football

- Footwear
- Furniture
- Gas
- Horeca
- Hospitals
- Inland Waterways
- Insurance
- Local and regional Government
- Personal services
- Postal services
- Private security
- Railways
- Road transport

- Sea fisheries
- Sea Transport
- Shipbuilding
- Steel
- Sugar
- Tanning and leather
- Telecommunications
- Temporary agency work
- Textile and clothing
- Woodworking

requests:

- automotive industry
- non-ferrous metals
- cycling
- sports

test (08-10):

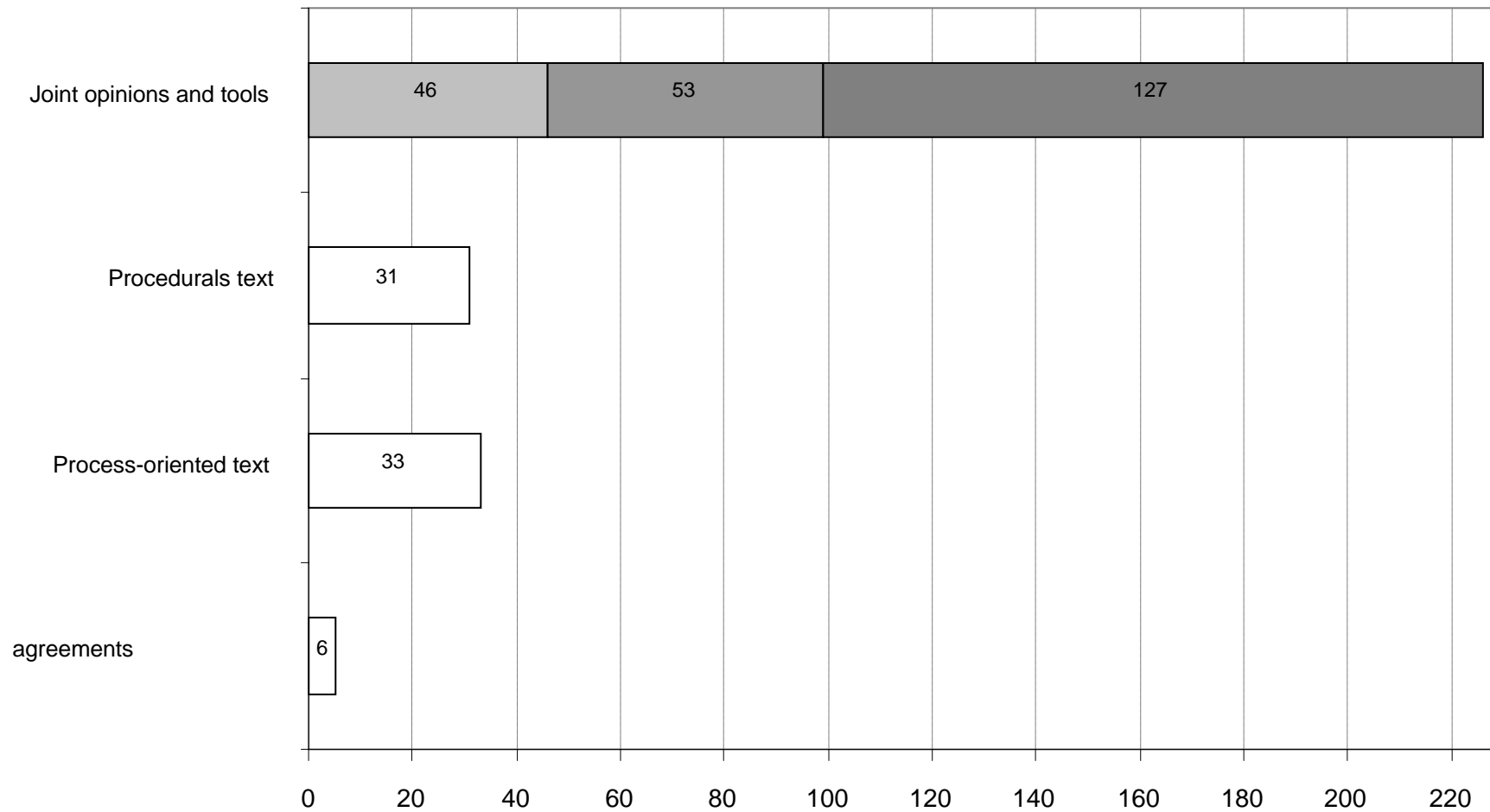
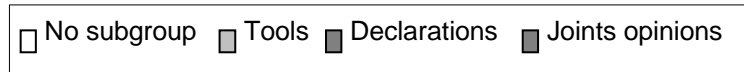
- public administration



II. Institutional developments

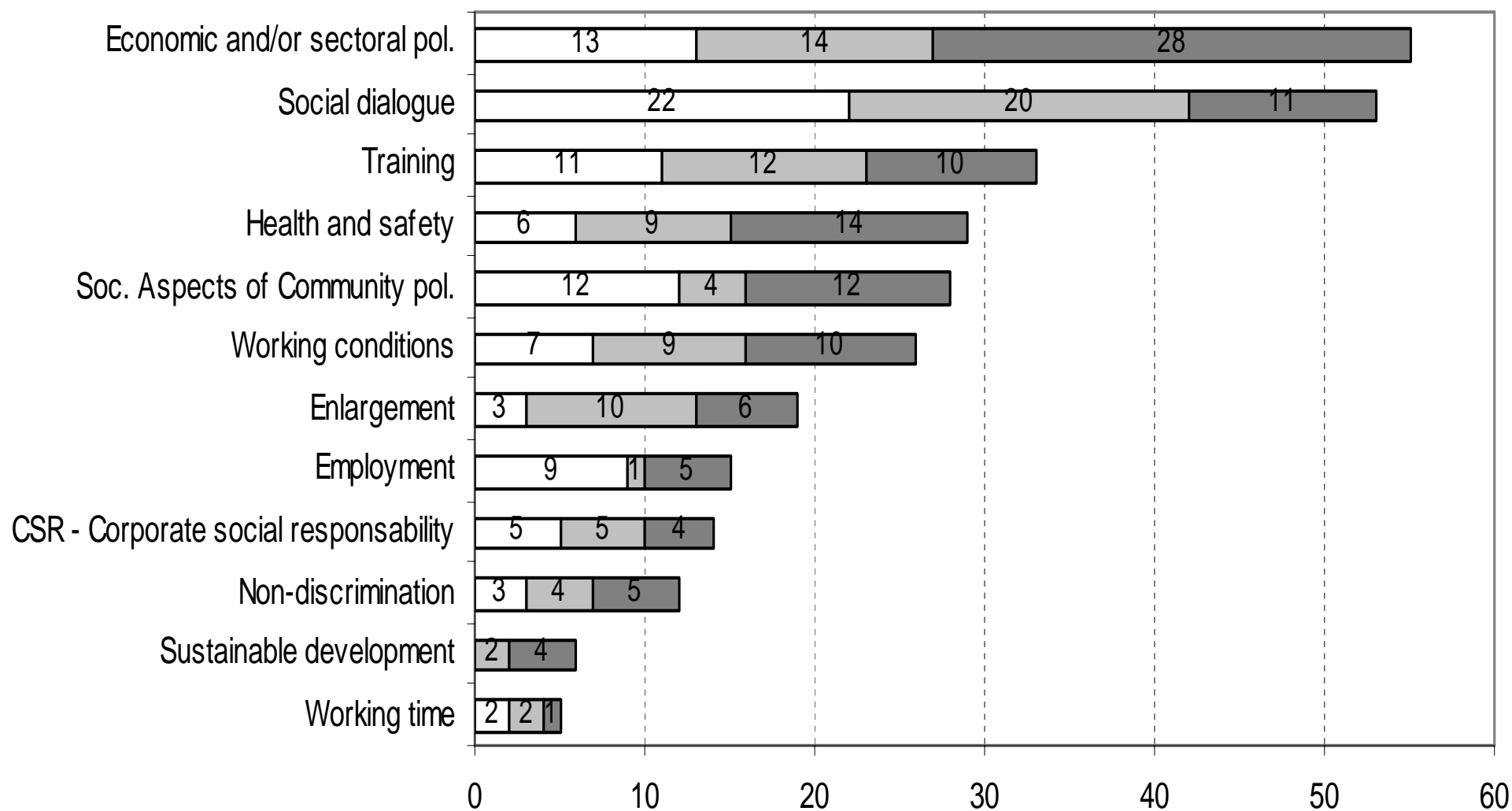
- **more than 300 joint texts**
 - ▶ **plethora of texts > growing in nos.**
 - ▶ **majority of ‘common positions’ to European institutions**
 - ▶ **no clear trend towards more binding agreements (2% only !)**

SSD: Number of documents per type (1999-2007)



SSD: Number of documents by topic (1999-2007)

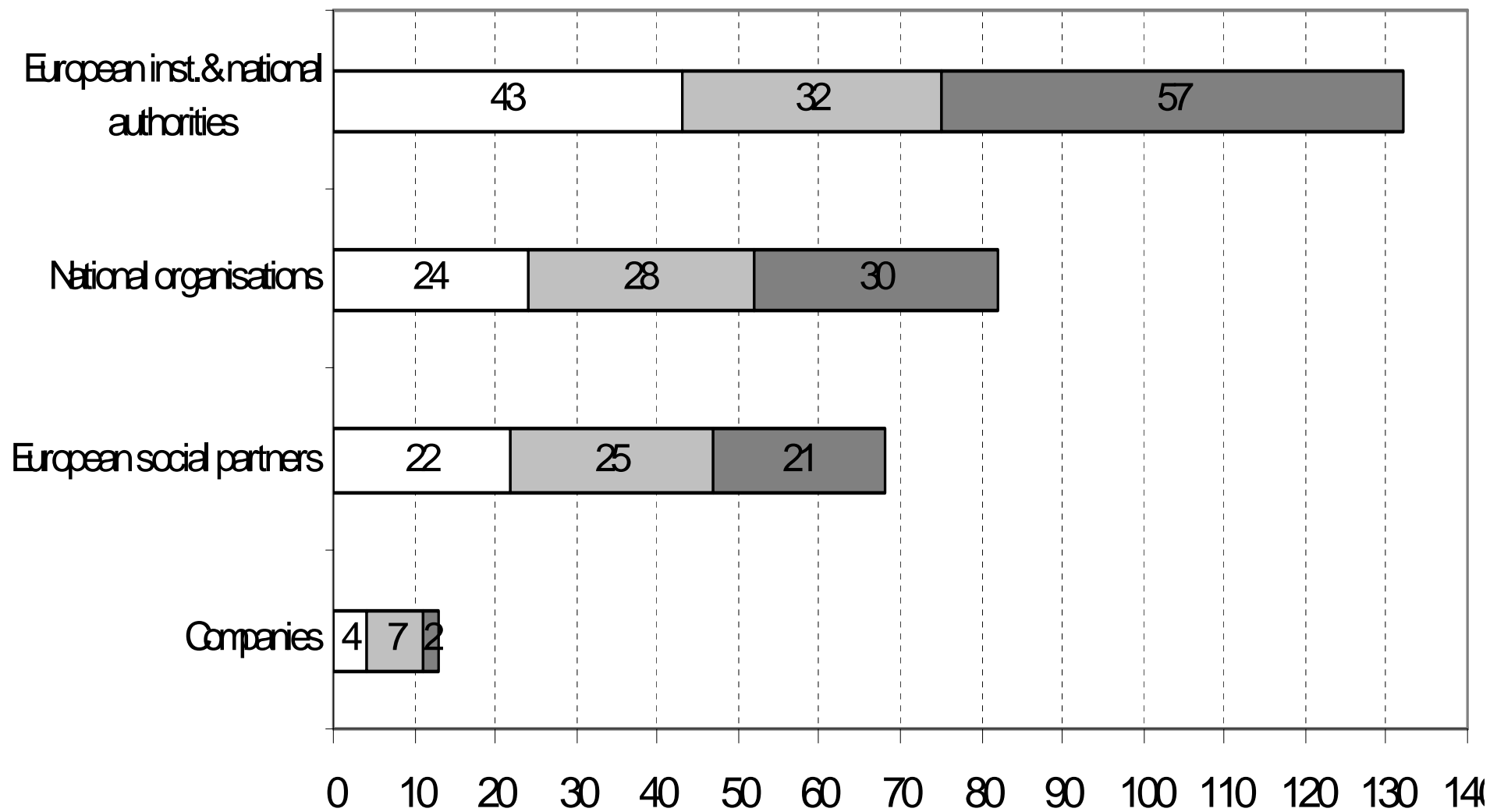
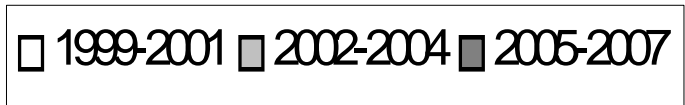
□ 1999-2001 ■ 2002-2004 ■ 2005-2007





II. Joint texts

- **2 broad categories of documents**
 - ▶ **intended for the attention of European or national public authorities (common position)**
 - ▶ **addressed to the social partners themselves (reciprocal commitments)**





III. Coordinating multi-level players

- **sectoral specificities prevail**
- **growing interaction**
 - ▶ **between sectoral and cross-sectoral social dialogue**
 - **e.g. telework, violence at workplace**
 - ▶ **between sectors (crystalline silica)**



III. Coordinating multi-level players

- **coordination with national members**
 - ▶ **heterogeneity of perimeters**
 - e.g. NACE demarcation
 - ▶ **heterogeneity of roles**
 - social partners vs. trade associations



III. Coordinating multi-level players

- **national players' commitment in ESSD**
 - ▶ **various degrees of participation**
 - **centre / periphery / absent**
- **issues at stake**
- **opportunities and constraints**
 - ▶ **human and financial resources**
 - ▶ **national IR context**



IV. Implementation of texts

- **implementation in MS**
 - ▶ **“EU peak organisations have no power or authority to enforce compliance...” (Keller 2003)**
- **process-oriented texts**
 - ▶ **implementation on a voluntary basis**
- **depend on**
 - ▶ **nature of text**
 - ▶ **national legal framework**
 - ▶ **maturity and level of experience in ESSD**



IV. Implementation of texts

- **categories of practical follow-up techniques**
 - 1) **written survey among members**
 - 2) **annual/periodic reports**
 - 3) **task forces/working groups/plenary meetings**
 - 4) **agreement on good practices**
 - 5) **conferences/websites**
 - 6) **new texts/new initiatives**



IV. Implementation of texts

- follow-up procedures > problematic
 - ▶ lack of regular and systematic monitoring
 - ▶ lack of information on impact in MS
 - ▶ patchy information
 - > patchy implementation?
 - ▶ yet: mutual learning and informal contacts



V. Conclusions

- **from a quantitative perspective:**
 - ▶ **less than 2% of the texts adopted are agreements with binding effect**
 - ▶ **only some texts are expected to have measurable impact at national level**



V. Conclusions

- **each sector has its own specific dynamics**
 - ▶ **defining a common interest not only represents a difficulty between trade unions and employers**
 - ▶ **also involves much intra-organisational negotiation**



V. Conclusions

- **implementation of texts relies on**
 - ▶ **the EU peak organisations**
 - ▶ **the goodwill of the national members**
 - ▶ **domestic institutional framework is a key dimension for implementation at national level (path dependency)**



V. Conclusions

- **growing interaction both between**
 - ▶ **the cross-industry and the sectoral level**
 - ▶ **and among sectors themselves**
- **complex level linkages between the EU and national level**



V. Conclusions

- **dynamics at play are complex, multiple and opaque**
- **dynamics differ from the traditional sector-level collective bargaining in the MS**
 - ▶ **multi-level/multi-actor**
 - ▶ **close cooperation with the EU institutions**
 - ▶ **numerous coordination processes**
 - ▶ **subtle forms of mutual learning**
- **there is a multiplicity of activities and high degree of vitality**



Further information

- <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/industrialrelations/governance.htm>
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