SoDi

Supporting the Implementation of the European Industrial Deal with Strengthened Social Dialogue in European Metal Sector.

Strengthening Social Dialogue in the European Metal Sector:

THE SODI PROJECT

A strategic initiative for a just transition within the framework of the European Industrial Deal

The European metal industry stands at a crucial crossroads. The transition to a greener and more digital economy, driven by the European Green Deal and the Industrial Deal, is creating unprecedented challenges for companies and workers in the sector. In this context, the SoDi project (Supporting the Implementation of the European Industrial Deal with Strengthened Social Dialogue in the European Metal Sector) emerges as a strategic response to reinforce social dialogue—a fundamental tool for ensuring a just transition.

WHAT IS SODI?

SoDi is a European project co-financed by the European Commission under the SOCPL-2024-SOC-DIALOG programme. It brings together a strong alliance of trade unions and employers' organisations from countries such as Poland, Bulgaria, Serbia, France, and North Macedonia, along with key EU-level actors like CEEMET and IndustriAll Europe.

The project, which runs for 24 months (April 2025 – March 2027), is coordinated by the Federation of Trade Unions of Metal and Steel Workers in Poland (FZZMiH). It aims to strengthen the capacities of social partners and promote more effective dialogue structures at both national and European levels.

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PROJECT OBJECTIVES

SoDi is based on a clear premise: the green and digital transitions will only succeed if they are built in a participatory and inclusive way. Its main objectives include:

- Analyzing the needs for strengthening social dialogue in the participating countries.
- Training unions and employers to negotiate fair working conditions in the new industrial context.
- Promoting the exchange of good practices through training sessions, national consultations, and international exchanges.
- Developing policy proposals that reinforce the role of social dialogue in the future of the sector.

A PRACTICAL AND PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

The project is structured around four main areas of work:

1. Project management and dissemination: monitoring meetings, newsletters, articles, and multimedia materials to raise awareness of the results.
2. Research and analysis: preparation of national reports and a European summary report to map current challenges in social dialogue.
3. Training and consultations: in-person and online sessions for social partners to share experiences and enhance skills.
4. Policy proposals and educational resources: development of an action plan on job quality, an e-learning platform, and a final international conference.

THE VALUE OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE IN TODAY'S EUROPE

Social dialogue, as promoted by the European Commission, is a cornerstone of the European social model. It allows trade unions and employers' organisations to play an active role in shaping public policies, ensuring that economic transitions do not come at the expense of workers' rights or business viability.

The SoDi project is a tangible example of how social dialogue can produce consensus-based solutions in strategic industrial sectors. Its outcomes will not only benefit directly involved stakeholders but also serve as a model for other industries undergoing similar transformations.

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A LASTING IMPACT FOR THE EUROPEAN METAL SECTOR

One of the key strengths of the SoDi project is its anticipated short- and long-term impact. Through a participatory methodology, the project will help improve labour relations in the metal sector, promoting a culture of dialogue based on trust, transparency, and mutual respect.

Strengthening social dialogue will not only ease the management of structural changes brought by the green and digital transitions but will also contribute to better job quality, increased business competitiveness, and reduced labour conflicts. The practical training of social actors directly translates into more stable labour relations and enhanced ability to anticipate future challenges.

Moreover, SoDi places strong emphasis on cross-country knowledge transfer, fostering peer learning and promoting synergies between national and European strategies. This is made possible thanks to the diverse composition of the consortium, which includes unions, employers' associations, and experts from various countries with different industrial contexts. The involvement of key organisations such as CEEMET (representing employers) and IndustriAll Europe (the European trade union federation for the sector) ensures alignment with current European policy debates.

ALIGNED WITH EU PRIORITIES ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE

SoDi is fully in line with the European Commission's strategic priorities on employment, competitiveness, and inclusion. The European Skills Agenda, the updated Industrial Strategy, and the European Pillar of Social Rights all recognise the central role of social dialogue in managing change and promoting more cohesive societies.
In this regard, SoDi is not just a sectoral project—it is a concrete contribution to building a fairer, more resilient, and socially advanced Europe.

A COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE OF WORK IN EUROPE

In summary, SoDi represents a unique opportunity to strengthen the capacities of the European metal sector, improve job quality, and build lasting consensus between workers and employers. Its collaborative, practical, and results-oriented approach makes it an example of how cooperation among social partners can contribute to a more sustainable, just, and inclusive industrial development.

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