

Final report on implementation

1. How was the project carried out? (Please provide a short description of the project, results and methodology. This part of the report will be published.)

CONFSESVIZI - the Italian Employers' Confederation Social Partner representing Undertakings and Public Organizations of Services of General Interest, including Public Local Transportation sector - developed the project "Outsourcing and Industrial Relations in City Lines of Transporting" with the purpose to promote a research on the impacts of different Outsourcing strategies on Collective Bargaining and Industrial Relations of Public Local Transport Undertakings operating in big Cities of Italy.

The subject, well bound and determined in the scope, actually used to arouse a mixed feeling of interest and suspicion in Italian Social Partners, during the previous ten/fifteen years, due to several overlapping causes.

On one side, trends of demand of Public Transportation, ever increasing in particular in big Cities with traffic restricted areas downtown, showed that Italian citizens wanted Public Transportation to be developed in quantity, quality and frequency, possibly with a wider supply of lines/means (city coach, tube, streetcar, trolleybus etc) but, in the meantime, they were averse to fare increases. Rapidly this had turned out to be a very important political issue not only due to the effects on citizens' quality of life but also because of its deep impacts on local economies and environment: central and local Administrations, managing Transportation Services, were keen to give the utmost attention to the subject but were also facing ever tougher constraints in budgets.

Hence several local Administrations and Undertakings in Italy started to seek solutions to the deadlock out of the possibility to entrust some production activities to the markets of outsourced services, which were supposed to develop and get wider/cheaper under the effect of the strong pro-competition rules gradually set by European Commission, which, on its side, was well against any kind of help or funding of Undertakings by any central or local Government.

On the other side, this creeping strategy towards the contracting out of activities by Undertakings of Local Public Transportation had to collide, from the very beginning, with the Trade Unions concerns about any turn down in workers' labour conditions.

This out-and-out aversion of Unions against these strategies was also fueled by the fact that "outsourcing" has never been a regulatory scheme duly set in Italian legal order, but remains still nowadays penned in the economics theory, with all the obvious knotty consequences in the field of Industrial Relations.

In this context CONFSESVIZI, over the first half of 2007, planned to carry out this international research aiming to:

- > take stock of the different kind of strategies towards outsourcing, already put in action by Italian Undertakings of the sector, in compliance with European and national law, and monitor their evolution in time;
- > evaluate their impacts on Industrial Relations at all levels and point out issues that eventually proved to be critical;
- > make comparisons with experience of other European Countries with very different levels of Outsourcing trends (in the submitted project they were singled out in France and Rumania);
- > verify the possibility to work out guidelines able to make such strategies more viable to Undertakings being caught up with such processes.

The analysis was carried out, following the ensuing organization:

- a kick-off meeting of the Beneficiary Confservizi with Italian Partners, on the forecasted date of the beginning of the project, in order to organize the following start-up activities;
- an International Steering Committee composed by at least one manager of each Partners, that gathered three times, on April 2008, on April 2009, and on May 2009, and performed respectively the following task - 1° meeting: define settings and index of research activities; 2° meeting: share the results of each Partner's analysis and verify all contributions to the final research document; 3° meeting: set out the final research document and perform a debate on it by a panel of experts;
- an International Working Group, composed by at least one senior Researcher of each Partner, that gathered three times, in the same days of the Steering Committee, and performed respectively the following task - 1° meeting: define a shared operation plan of research activities; 2° meeting: point out the further elaborations to perform the fine tuning of the research document; 3° meeting: check up on the overall coherence of the final research document;
- the 3° meeting of May 2009 was also publicized by the Beneficiary to his members Associations of Undertakings of the Sector and to the Unions as an event of dissemination.

The research followed the ensuing steps, as commonly set out by all Partners:

- after the communication of the granting of the project and before the first International meeting, each Partner proposed his suggestions to realize the draft of the “Common Guidelines of analysis” aiming to define the index of the research final document and a common pattern of analysis;
- between the first and the second International meeting, in execution of the abovementioned Guidelines, each Partner carried out, separately at his level and always in direct touch with all other partners, the desk research activities and collection of study materials to gather and analyze law and regulatory schemes sources of the Sector as well as (for National Partners) a specific in-depth analysis of actual cases of Outsourcing carried out by Undertaking of each Country and its impacts on Industrial Relations, in order to work out the draft of the several parts of the research to be shared in the second International meeting;
- between the second and the third International meeting, each Partner worked on the fine tuning of his part of the research to harmonize it with the other Partners', in order to realize the final document to be presented and publicized in the third and final International meeting.

2. How has the operation met the objectives of the budget heading?

The objectives of the budget Heading 04030301, sub-program II “improving expertise in the field of industrial relations”, on which the request of subvention was presented by the Beneficiary at the end of August 2007 and granted by the competent European Community DG at the end of November 2007, in brief were recorded as: to improve expertise in industrial relations, to promote the exchange of information and experience among parties actively involved in industrial relations and to promote the development of industrial relations in Europe.

The action carried out in the project “Outsourcing and Industrial Relations in City Lines of Transporting” met these objectives under several aspects, as, among other, it granted: remarkable improvements of expertise of all Partners on the issue of impacts on Industrial Relations of Outsourcing strategies recently carried out by Undertakings in the Partner's own Country; very useful exchanges of information and experience between each other Partner on the regulatory schemes of the Sector in the different Countries; a common reflection on the situation of Industrial Relations of the Sector at national level and Social Dialogue at European level towards processes supposed to pursue . These important objectives were granted thanks to the efforts of all Partner and will possibly contribute to create the condition to lasting growth with better job, in accordance to the goals of the Lisbon Strategy.

Particular importance has to be acknowledged to the Partnership of CEEP-IT, Employers' Social Partner of the European Social Dialogue, as well as of SindNova-Cisl, Center of research of the Italian Trade Union Cisl: both of them, with they proactive contribution to the project works, gave

evidence to the efforts of all Partners to go beyond any biased pre-determined position, to try and pursue solutions aiming to improve competitiveness and quality of Public Local Transportation matched, where possible, with upgrades in working conditions.

3. Describe the transnational dimension of the operation.

The transnational dimension of the action was steadily assured by a full side-by-side cooperation of all Partners, in a way that research and study activities were tightly based on the sharing of experiences and knowledge among partners.

On one side, the beneficiary Confservizi together with ANL Association for Italy, as well as the PSP - Patronatul Serviciilor Publice (Employers' Organization of Public Services) for Rumania and the French Lasaire, a social innovation research Center engaged on reflections and exchanges on the social dimension of Europe granted a thorough understanding of each Country specific situation.

On the other side, the mentioned presence of CEEP-IT together with SindNova-Cisl, thanks to their European role, ensured the utmost attention to the European Social Dialogue point of view, a further dimension of exchange and discussion.

This international collaboration was displayed not only by the sharing of a common methodology and working plan, but also by the commitment of each Partner to take into account others' needs and requirements, while performing the study and research activities devolved to his own responsibility, under the common working plan, and resolving in a document expressing different position in a common pattern.

To the purpose, the three international meetings were scheduled, and executed, at the beginning of the study activities, close to its end, and to present the final report document (being the last international meeting also the occasion of a multinational discussion of experts on the subject).

4. How were social partners/stakeholders involved? Participation of social Partners

The Social Partners' full involvement into both the organization and the research activities of the project was one of the focal point in the selection of the Partnership.

The Beneficiary Confservizi itself, as Social Partner, from the beginning retained mandatory the presence of one Partner per Country that could directly grant the commitment of Social Partners as well as the knowledge of all distinctive features of the Sector and, of course, the direct access to the Undertakings to analyze the Outsourcing experiences to be examined. This was assured by PSP, as Social Partner itself representing the Undertakings of SGI in Rumania. On the other side, the French Partner Lasaire, even though not a Social Partner, could assure an in-depth knowledge of the labour market trends of its Country combined with a more nonpartisan and broad-spectrum position, coming from his long-lasting partnership with several French Social Partners.

Last but not least, at European level, CEEP-IT offered the perspective of European Social Partners' warnings and prompts, and SindNova-Cisl granted the enriching point of Trade Unions insight, at national and European level: both of those last contribution turned out to be very important in the effort of pursuing the added value of the action.

5. What contribution was made by the partners?

As already mentioned, the contribution of Partners, very relevant in quantity and quality, was based on their full involvement in all phases of the project as, of course, in a shared concern - each under different perspectives - on the trends of Public Local Transportation. Of course, this participation was much the result of the mentioned circumstance that all Partners were stakeholders, when not Social Partner themselves, of Collective Bargaining in different contexts.

In this perspective, Partners used to share, all over the project and with one accord, knowledge and expertise coming from such diverse experiences.

Each Partner, took straight charge of materials collection and of all research activities required by the study in accordance to the working plan and guidelines set out in the first International Meeting. As a result of this common effort, all Partners drew-up its own written contribution to the project, in the

form of a specific section of the research document, containing a detailed summary of milestones and outcomes of its study.

6. What added value has the project contributed?

The project represented a unique international context where Partners could develop an in-depth cross-border analysis over a relevant subject for Public Urban Transportation future strategies: the impacts of Outsourcing strategies on Industrial Relations and Collective Bargaining.

For instance, all Partners had the opportunity to make comparisons between contexts featured by different stages of evolution, regulatory schemes, trends and constraint.

During international meeting, they could also ask each other for opinions and comments about possible scenarios and benefit from a common discussion over such issues, by a qualified panel of experts.

7. How was the operation publicised and how have the results been disseminated?

The project was publicized by all Partners in several forms over their network.

First, during the planning of the action before the financial subvention, each Partner (and in particular those being Social Partners themselves) diffused the project idea, at different levels, while verifying the interest of Undertakings of the sector, also in order to fine-tune the project.

Then, before each International Meeting all Partners publicized the agenda and the documents to be presented to the Steering Committee, as well as after each Meeting to diffuse the outcomes of the discussion.

Finally, the main proper action of dissemination took place, as scheduled, during the third International Meeting, when Partners presented and discussed the final Research document, and then an a panel of experts from each Partner and other experienced of the subject hold an open discussion of all the issues of the subject.

As scheduled, the research document has been printed and diffused also through internet.

8. What other efforts have been made to ensure that the project has a lasting impact?

To ensure to the project the most enduring impact, the Beneficiary and all Partners outlined and kept hold of a working pattern fully based on both experiences sharing and common methodology.

On one hand, every document (from the Guidelines of the study settled during the first Steering Committee down to the Research document itself) was reassessed by each Partner after any update, to make sure that all could confront each other on every suggestion or remark, included concerns of Unions, coming from the different contexts of each Country.

On the other, all project activities were scheduled and performed following shared scientific methodologies in order to grant a common denominator to the different situations.

Thanks to these efforts, project analysis and study activities were focused on actually needs and drives, so as to perform a research that will be very useful to Undertakings being entangled with Outsourcing processes in the Public Local Transportation sector over the next future in the Countries involved.

9. What lessons have been learnt from this experience?

During the project, Beneficiary and Partners got through several favorable circumstances as well as few critical ones: from all there was an opportunity to learn some lessons.

Maybe the most important was about the unexpected added value of international exchange of experiences on a subject usually deemed to be bound through and though by national context: on the contrary, as mentioned before, the matching of different situations gave the Partners a new perspective to their own Country context.

Another surprise was the commitment gathered by research activities in the most part of Undertakings and Organization involved.

But, on this side, one critical lesson was also learnt by the experience of the delays in project scheduled activities during the months soon before and after the political or administrative elections, due to the manifest concerns on possible outcomes on the management of the Undertakings.

10. Are there any plans to follow up this project, and if so, how?

During the research activities, Partners confirmed their interest on the opportunity of an “Observatory on Outsourcing strategies” in the sector, to be set up at European level: it could record and study the Collective Bargaining processes triggered at all levels by the bigger Outsourcing events taking place in Public Local Transportation of the Countries being Partners of the Observatory.

Of course, the following step is to turn this need in a viable and scheduled plan, with answers to the many problems connected, like the way to manage the large number of Employers’ Social Partners (at least one per Country) taking part of the Observatory, or the specific role of the Observatory to play in the European Social Dialogue.

This could be, according to the project Partners, a high added value follow-up of this project.