



REPUBLIC BULGARIA
M I I S T E R S K I S E V E T

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of 17 February 2026

ON THE ADOPTION OF PLAN
FOR PROMOTING COLLECTIVE
BARGAINING 2026–2030

THE MINISTRY HAS DECIDED:

To adopt the Plan for the Promotion of Collective Bargaining
2026–2030.

PRIME MINISTER: /s/ Rosen Zhelyazkov

CHIEF SECRETARY OF
THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS: /s/ Gabriela Kozareva

HEAD OF THE
“RECORDS
MANAGEMENT AND

Л
РХИВ”:

/Z

Кадън кова



НҲАҲ
3А НАСЗЅРҲАБАҲЕ НА КОЈЇКҲБҲОТО
ЅОҲОБАРҲЕ

2026–2030

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I. INTRODUCTION

Collective bargaining is at the heart of modern labour relations and is a key component of the European social model. It fulfils an important protective function for workers and plays a significant distributive role, ensuring that workers receive a fair share of economic growth. Collective bargaining is a key factor in improving working conditions and enables their adaptation to changing social and economic conditions.

The Plan for the Promotion of Collective Bargaining for the period 2026–2030 (PNKD 2026–2030) is a strategic document developed in line with the priorities of the Governance Programme of the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2025–2029, adopted by Decision No 91/2025 of the Council of Ministers. Through the NCP 2026–2030, the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria has identified as a priority the expansion of the scope of collective bargaining by 2030.

The Plan for the Promotion of Collective Bargaining for the period 2026–2030 has been drawn up in accordance with the obligations incumbent on the Republic of Bulgaria under Directive (EC) 2022/2041 of the European Parliament and of the Council on adequate minimum wages in the European Union (Directive 2022/2041/EC) and the Council Recommendation of 12 June 2023 on strengthening social dialogue in the European Union (Council Recommendation). Directive 2022/2041/EC and the Council Recommendation require Member States to adopt an action plan to gradually increase the level of collective bargaining coverage, whilst fully respecting the autonomy of the social partners. The plan is also in line with Principle No 8 of the European Pillar of Social Rights and underpins the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The 2026–2030 Action Plan is in line with the opinion of the Economic and Social Council on ‘Approaches to drawing up an action plan to promote collective bargaining in Bulgaria’.

The Plan for the Promotion of Collective Bargaining for the period 2026–2030 is a document that consolidates the efforts of the government and those of the social partners, contributing to their alignment. It aims to guarantee the labour rights of workers and employees on the one hand, and to promote fair competition on the other. In this regard, the main objectives, priorities and specific measures have been defined to promote collective bargaining whilst fully respecting the autonomy of the social partners.

II. CURRENT STATUS AND TRENDS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF COLLECTIVE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Collective bargaining forms part of the primary law of the European Union (EU). It is based on the European social model, which enables the social partners to engage in autonomous dialogue capable of leading to collective agreements on all aspects and issues in the field of labour.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, collective bargaining systems in the EC have undergone significant transformations. A characteristic feature of this period is the lack of autonomous agreements between workers' and employees' representatives and employers at EC level. An additional negative factor was the financial crisis of 2007–2008, which resulted in a rapid decline in collective bargaining coverage in most Member States. The average coverage of collective bargaining in the EC fell from approximately 66% in 2000 to around 56% in 2018.

During this period, there has also been a significant change in the structure of the labour market in the EC, with considerable fragmentation and an increase in the number of micro and small enterprises, where it is more difficult to organise trade union structures. The shift in economic models and the labour market in the EC also includes a trend towards increasing diversification and fragmentation of services, as well as a rise in precarious and non-standard forms of employment. Digitalisation further complicates these processes, making it harder to organise workers and engage in effective collective bargaining, particularly in emerging forms of employment, including the increasingly widespread use of digital platforms.

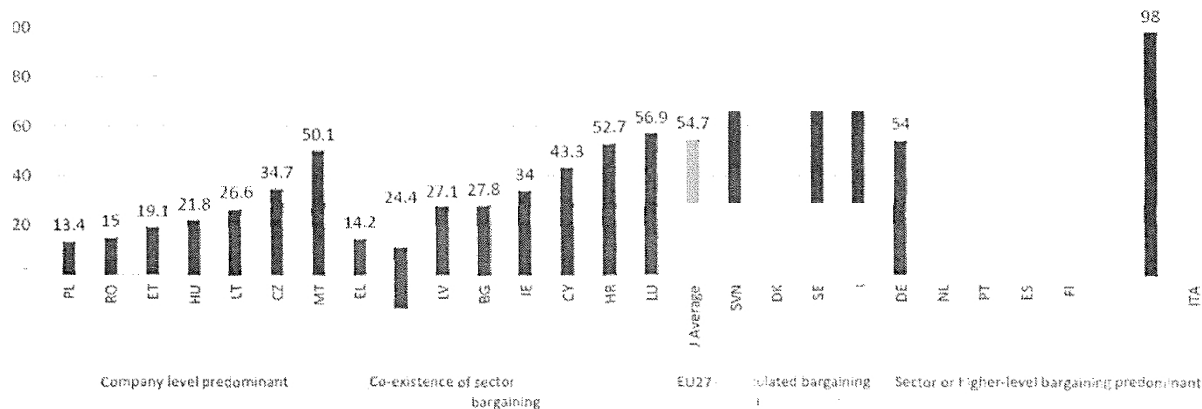
Another key reason for the declining coverage of collective bargaining in the EC is the general trend of falling trade union membership and low union density. This is a global trend, with trade union membership being low in most industrialised economies. The declining number of trade union members also affects workers' bargaining power and the ability of trade unions to take collective action. This creates a vicious circle in which low union density leads to low coverage of collective agreements, which makes organising new members even more difficult, as workers do not see any immediate benefits from union membership. Furthermore, the increased number of micro and small enterprises also poses a challenge to the organisation of employers within employer organisations.

The level of collective bargaining coverage has remained relatively stable since 2018, with collective labour agreements covering around 55% of workers in the EU in 2024. Differences in coverage between individual EU Member States are significant, with the lowest levels found in Central and Eastern European countries. For example, in Austria, France, Belgium, Denmark, Finland and Sweden collective bargaining coverage exceeds 90%. This level is mainly due to two factors — the existence of a mechanism for the automatic extension of collective agreements and strong social partner structures in the various sectors of the economy. On the other hand, there are the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Romania), where coverage is around or below 30%.

All studies show a direct correlation between the level of bargaining and the coverage of collective bargaining. Coverage is generally low in countries where

¹ Eurofound (2023), ETUI Collective Bargaining Reports, DG Employment, EU Commission Staff Working Document (SWD/2021/29 Gmal).

collective bargaining takes place mainly at enterprise level. Much higher levels are observed in countries where collective bargaining is prioritised at sectoral level. The highest coverage of collective agreements is found in countries where bargaining takes place at sectoral level and there are established mechanisms for extending agreements to enterprises and workers, regardless of membership of trade unions or employers’ organisations.



Note: * Or most recent year available (2014 and later)
Source: OECD/AIAS (April 2025)

In response to negative trends regarding collective bargaining in the EC, a Council Recommendation and Directive (EC) 2022/2041 have been adopted, which aim to encourage Member States to take action to increase coverage. An additional reason for this is that Member States with a high coverage of collective bargaining generally have better social convergence, with a lower percentage of low-paid workers and higher minimum wages.

An analysis of the current state and trends in the development of collective bargaining in the EC clearly demonstrates the need for a strategic reorientation towards strengthening sectoral bargaining in order to achieve an increase in its coverage.

III. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK, CURRENT STATUS AND TRENDS IN COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN BULGARIA

1. Macroeconomic development'

A key factor in collective bargaining is the structure of the economy and macroeconomic development. In line with general trends in all industrialised countries, including all EC member states, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) play a key role in economic development in Bulgaria and are a major factor in the labour market. They account for 75.7% of total employment and 65.3% of value added in the economy. Of particular significance is the fact that 50% of the country’s total exports are carried out by SMEs, which represent 98% of all exporting firms in Bulgaria.

Source: Ministry of Finance, Convergence Programme of the Republic of Bulgaria 2024–2027

In 2025, the geopolitical and economic situation is complex, with tensions rising globally. The conflict in Ukraine continues, tensions between the US and China are growing, and the Middle East remains unstable. In Europe, issues such as energy security, defence and migration are at the forefront. Economic growth is uneven, and global supply chains are being restructured due to trade tensions, making the macroeconomic environment highly unpredictable.

In 2024, Bulgaria's real gross domestic product growth reached 2.8%. By the end of 2025, economic growth is expected to accelerate to 3%, supported by public spending, whilst in 2026 a reduction in public investment will lead to a slowdown in GDP growth to 2.5%.

In 2024, the Bulgarian economy recorded employment growth of 1.1%, which is mainly due to the increase in the number of people employed in the services and construction sectors. The forecast for the coming years is that employment will continue to grow, albeit at a slower pace. The unemployment rate is expected to undergo minimal changes, despite the projected growth in employment.

Nominal growth in compensation per employee reached 10.4% in 2024 and is lower than forecast. In 2025, the growth rate of this indicator in nominal terms is estimated at 8.7%, and in 2026 at 4.3%.

Average annual inflation in 2024, according to the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices, is 2.6%. Average annual inflation is expected to accelerate to 3.6% in 2025. The largest contribution will come from service prices, followed by food.

2. Employment trends

For 2025, employment growth is expected to be 0.6% and to fall to 0.3% in 2026, whilst in 2027 and 2028 the number of people in employment is expected to remain virtually unchanged. The slowdown in the annual rate of employment growth is primarily due to unfavourable demographic trends in the country and the increasing difficulty of expanding the labour supply solely through the local labour market.

Micro-enterprises with up to 9 employees, which account for over 93% of all firms in the country, are significantly predominant in terms of their number. The share of large enterprises with over 250 employees is relatively low (only 770 at national level), which has an impact on collective bargaining coverage.

The highest concentration of enterprises is observed in the South-West region (179,636 enterprises), which includes the capital, Sofia. At the opposite end of the spectrum is the North-West region, which has the fewest enterprises and, consequently, weaker economic development. There is a significant imbalance between Northern and South-Eastern Bulgaria and South-Western and South-Central Bulgaria, with the latter group of regions accounting for nearly 60% of the country's enterprises. These figures highlight the need to promote growth and support the expansion of small and medium-sized enterprises, particularly in less developed regions.

3. Collective bargaining — development, regulatory framework and institutional framework

3.1. Protection of the right to organise

A prerequisite for collective bargaining is the protection of the right of association. Article 49, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria (CRB) stipulate that workers and employees have the right to organise themselves into trade union organisations and federations to protect their interests in the field of labour and social security. Employers have the right to organise themselves to protect their economic interests.

The legal framework in this area in Bulgaria is in line with international standards. Bulgaria has ratified the fundamental conventions of the International Labour Organisation, including Convention No. 98 concerning the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining of 1949 and Convention No. 87 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise of 1948. As a Member State of the EC, the Republic of Bulgaria also complies with the principles of the European Social Charter (revised), including Article 6 thereof, which regulates the right to collective bargaining. Article 116(2) of the Constitution provides that the conditions under which civil servants may join trade unions shall be determined by law.

In accordance with the constitutionally recognised right and international standards, the Labour Code (LC) regulates the right of workers and employees, as well as employers, to form associations in Bulgaria. They have the right, without prior authorisation, to freely form trade unions and employers' organisations of their own choosing, as well as to join and leave them voluntarily.

Article 33(1) of the LC establishes the right of trade unions and employers' organisations, within the framework of the law, to draw up and adopt their own statutes and rules of procedure, to freely elect their bodies and representatives, to organise their management, and to adopt programmes for their activities. In view of the special status of these organisations, Article 49 of the Labour Code sets out a special procedure for them to acquire the status of a legal entity.

In order to guarantee/facilitate the performance of the core activities of trade union organisations in representing and protecting the interests of workers and employees, under the provision of Article 46 of the Labour Code, the legislator has imperatively obliged state authorities and employers to create the necessary conditions and to assist them in carrying out their inherent functions and tasks, including through collective bargaining.

Article 44(1) of the Civil Servants Act (CSA) establishes the right of civil servants to freely form trade unions, to join and to terminate their membership of them, subject only to their statutes. Under paragraph 2 of the same article, trade unions of civil servants have the right to adopt their own statutes and rules of procedure, as well as to elect their own bodies and representatives.

To ensure the successful implementation of trade union protection for civil servants, Article 45(1) of the Civil Servants Act expressly introduces the requirement that trade union organisations of civil servants must acquire the status of a legal entity following their registration in accordance with the procedure for non-profit associations provided for in the Non-Profit Legal Entities Act (NPLEA). Upon the dissolution of such a trade union organisation, property relations between its members are settled in

accordance with the provisions of their statutes, pursuant to Article 45(2) of the Civil Servants Act.

For other trade union organisations, the provisions of a separate law apply where such a law exists—for workers and employees under the Labour Code and for civil servants under special laws such as the Ministry of the Interior Act (MOIA)— and where there is no such legislation, the Non-Profit Legal Entities Act applies until such legislation comes into force (Section 2(1) and (2) of the Transitional and Final Provisions of the Non-Profit Legal Entities Act). For certain specific categories of civil servants, for example those involved in defence and national security, trade union activity is prohibited (Article 184 of the Law on Defence and the Armed Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria and Article 45(3) of the Law on the State Agency ‘National Security’).

The general obligation of state authorities to assist trade union organisations of civil servants by providing them, free of charge, with premises and other material conditions for the performance of their functions is enshrined in Article 46 of the Civil Servants Act. The legislation also contains numerous protective mechanisms for trade union representatives and trade union members. For example, Article 8(3) of the Labour Code establishes a mandatory prohibition on direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of trade union membership. The right of trade union officials to take paid leave is provided for (Article 159 of the Labour Code). The requirement for prior authorisation to dismiss a member of a trade union leadership body within an undertaking, or of a territorial, sectoral or national elected trade union body, is regulated for the duration of their term of office position and for up to six months after their dismissal (Article 333(3) of the Labour Code).

In 2023, amendments to the Criminal Code established that creating an obstacle to the exercise of the right to trade union association or the rights arising therefrom constitutes a criminal offence.

The legislation on the civil service also provides for mechanisms concerning trade union representatives and trade union members. In the civil service, discrimination, privileges or restrictions based on membership of trade union organisations are not permitted (Article 7(6) of the Civil Service Act). Article 63a of the Civil Service Act provides for paid leave for trade union activities, whereby part-time members of the central and sectoral leaderships of trade union organisations under Article 45 of the Civil Service Act, as well as the non-staff chairpersons of trade union leaderships in the relevant administration, are entitled to 25 working hours of such leave per calendar year. Provision is made for representatives of trade union organisations of civil servants from the relevant administration to participate in selection boards (Article 106(2), second sentence, of the Civil Service Act). The Ordinance on the Conditions and Procedure for the Performance Appraisal of Civil Servants (OCPACS) regulates the participation of the trade union organisation of workers and civil servants in the relevant administration in the appraisal process. The assessment is carried out under the supervision and control of a supervising manager and the trade union organisation (Article 3(2) of the NUROISDA). An authorised representative of the trade union organisation is entitled to review an employee’s appraisal form if the employee is a member of the trade union and has submitted a written request for an opinion from the trade union organisation (Article 21(3) of the NUROISDA). When lodging an objection to the annual assessment, the employee may send a copy to the trade union organisation within the administrative structure

of which they are a member (Art. 23(2) of the NUROISDA), and the trade union organisation may provide an opinion (Art. 24(1) of the NUROISDA). Furthermore, trade unions are authorised under Article 128(1) of the Civil Servants Act to submit reports to the Executive Agency

The General Labour Inspectorate (GLI) to carry out unannounced inspections to

compliance with legislation relating to the performance of public service and the rights and obligations of the parties to the employment relationship.

3.2. Development of the regulatory framework for collective bargaining

In national legislation, the regulations on collective bargaining are contained in various legislative acts. For those in an employment relationship, who constitute the majority of the country's workforce, matters relating to collective bargaining are regulated by the Labour Code. Collective bargaining for those in a civil service relationship (civil servants) is conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Service Act.

Collective labour bargaining for workers and employees in Bulgaria has a long-standing tradition and established practice. Proper collective bargaining in the modern socio-economic context began in 1991 pursuant to Decree No. 129 of the Council of Ministers of July 1991 concerning wage negotiations.

The amendment and supplementation of the Labour Code in 1992 established the necessary legal guarantees for transforming collective bargaining into the primary mechanism for regulating labour relations. With these changes, collective labour agreements became, for the first time, a source of norms for regulating industrial relations. Opportunities were created for the development of the contractual principle at the expense of a reduction in mandatory provisions. A shift took place towards a model of legal regulation of labour relations in which the law contains minimum standards for labour protection, whilst the establishment of more favourable conditions is achieved through the mechanism of collective bargaining.

Between 1992 and 2000, several amendments were made to the Labour Code relating to collective bargaining, with the aim of providing a regulatory framework that would create optimal conditions for its effective implementation within the socio-economic conditions prevailing at that time.

The subsequent significant reform in the field of collective bargaining for employees under labour law was introduced with the amendments to the Labour Code of 2001. These relate to the clear definition of bargaining levels, including the possibility of concluding collective agreements at enterprise, sector and industry level. The procedure for extending the application of a collective agreement or its clauses to all enterprises within the sector or industry has been regulated, which is a new mechanism for broadening the scope of collective bargaining that has proven effective in many other European countries. Significant changes have been made regarding the duration of a collective labour agreement, and a deadline has been set for commencing negotiations on a new collective labour agreement before the current one expires. The application of concluded collective agreements to employees is regulated, as is the possibility for workers and employees who are not trade union members to join the agreement concluded within the enterprise.

The 2008 amendments to the Labour Code marked the start of the development of an information system for collective labour agreements at the National Institute for Conciliation and Arbitration (NIPA), based on the register maintained by the General Labour Inspectorate (GLI).

The 2020 amendments to the Labour Code introduced the most recent changes to

date in the field of collective bargaining. These aim to revive interest in collective bargaining and, consequently, to increase and encourage the establishment of and membership in trade union and employer organisations. The obligation of

representative organisations of workers and employees and employers at national level to make efforts to develop social dialogue and cooperation, which will contribute to the establishment of collective bargaining. Provision is made for the inclusion of a clause in the collective labour agreement regarding a membership fee for workers and employees who are not members of the trade union organisation that is a party to the agreement. The requirements relating to the extension of concluded sectoral or industry-wide collective labour agreements have been improved, with the adoption of a clear and transparent procedure designed to safeguard the rights of interested parties.

In 1999, the Civil Servants Act was adopted, regulating the specific features of the legal relationship concerning the performance of work by civil servants in the course of and in connection with the performance of public service. Following the adoption of the Civil Service Act, collective bargaining in respect of civil servants is regulated by this legislative act, as well as by other special laws governing the civil service in specific areas, such as the Law on the Ministry of the Interior and others, with no provision for the subsidiary application of the Labour Code.

The legislator has clearly distinguished between service and employment relationships in the Civil Service Act and the Labour Code respectively. The difference between them is substantial, as they are governed by different branches of law — public and private law respectively — although the civil service relationship is characterised by elements also inherent in the employment relationship, such as salary, working hours, leave, rest periods, compensation, etc.

An employment relationship generally arises between parties on an equal footing by virtue of an employment contract, selection or competition, with no statutory requirements for the selection of candidates. Even where the employment relationship arises from selection or a competition, prior to commencing work, the two parties agree on the amount of remuneration and other terms of the employment relationship (Art. 107 of the Labour Code). Under labour law, there is no statutory maximum amount of remuneration that both parties are obliged to comply with. Given the contractual element, workers and employees under an employment relationship may, through the mechanism of collective bargaining agreements, collectively negotiate with employers rights exceeding the minimum established in the Labour Code and its subordinate legislation — at the level of the enterprise, trade, sector and municipality.

Civil servants have a special public-law status and their rights and obligations are unilaterally determined in accordance with the Civil Servants Act and other laws governing specific categories of civil servants. The civil service legal relationship arises between the state and the civil servant, on the basis of an administrative act following a compulsory competition, in connection with the performance of civil service duties and to assist in the exercise of the powers of a state authority (pursuant to Article 2(1) of the Civil Service Act). In the civil service, selection takes place at two levels — on the basis of the statutory conditions and impediments to holding civil service office (incompatibility) and through a competitive procedure preceding appointment. The performance of public service is also subject to a number of restrictions specific to it — restrictions on the right to strike, the continuity of service, specific working hours, including in the context of national security, requirements regarding conduct, and so on. A key restriction, under the Ordinance on the Salaries of Civil Servants (OSCS), which has a direct bearing on collective bargaining

opportunities, is the statutory minimum and maximum levels of basic monthly salaries by grade and rank for the relevant post levels in

the Classification of Positions in the Administration. In addition, the individual gross monthly salaries of civil servants are determined within the limits of the expenditure on salaries, remuneration and compulsory social security contributions under the budgets of the primary budget administrators in accordance with the State Budget Act of the Republic of Bulgaria for the relevant year and the Local Self-Government and Local Administration Act (Article 5(1) of the Public Sector Pay Regulation). Public funds are spent in the state administration, which is subject to control by the competent institutions — the National Audit Office and the State Financial Inspection Agency.

Another significant difference in trade union activity between civil service and employment relationships lies in the levels and forms of cooperation, which stems from the difference in the parties involved. In an employment relationship, one of the parties is the employer, who, within the meaning of the Labour Code, is any natural person, legal entity or its division, as well as any other organisationally and economically separate entity (enterprise, institution, organisation, cooperative, farm, establishment, household, company and the like) which independently employs workers or employees under an employment relationship. In the private sector, employers are diverse private-law entities with diverse activities, private interests and budgets. In the public sector, the role of the other party is performed not by a private-law entity but by the state/state administration, through the appointing authority. Given its unified and public-law nature, the civil service is not characterised by an employer, and social dialogue (cooperation) takes place solely in a bilateral form (between the state/state administration and the trade union organisations of civil servants).

The specific nature of civil service employment relationships as opposed to labour relations, and the resulting specific features of civil servants' trade union activities and their cooperation with the state, are also recognised in international law and European Union law. Article 6 of Convention No. 98 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) of 1949 concerning the right to organise and collective bargaining, ratified by Bulgaria, expressly states that it does not apply to civil servants. ILO Convention No. 151 concerning Labour Relations in the Public Sector of 1978, which this Plan envisages will be ratified by Bulgaria, makes no distinction between employees under an employment contract and those under a civil service contract in the public sector. Consequently, Article 7 of the Convention provides, on the one hand, that measures to promote mechanisms for negotiating terms and conditions of employment between the relevant public authorities and public sector staff organisations should be adapted to national conditions and applied where necessary; and, on the other hand, it allows, as an alternative, the application of other methods—i.e. methods other than negotiation—to ensure

"The unity of the civil service is expressed in uniform rules which should be applied in all institutions. It stems from the unity of the state, state authority, state policy, state administration and the state budget, which in turn is conditioned by the unity of the people/nation and popular sovereignty, and the empowerment by the people of the bodies provided for in the Constitution to exercise state power indirectly (on their behalf) and in their interest. In view of this unity, the probationary period for civil servants is imperatively regulated in Article 12 of the Civil Service Act as a one-off, continuous (one-year) period, commencing upon initial appointment to the civil service and continuing until its expiry without termination of the employment relationship. Once the probationary period has expired (established employment relationship), there are opportunities for temporary secondment to another administrative structure, including outside Bulgaria (to EC institutions), without a competition and without termination of the employment relationship with the sending administration (Articles 81b and 81c of the Civil Service Act).

the participation of public sector employees in determining these conditions. ILO Convention No. 154 on Collective Bargaining of 1981, also scheduled for ratification under this Plan, provides for flexibility and adaptation in the application of the rules in the public sector: *“With regard to public services, national laws or regulations or national practice may determine the specific means of applying this Convention.”* (Article 1, paragraph 3 of the Convention).

Directive (EC) 2022/2041 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on adequate minimum wages in the European Union (Directive (EC) 2022/2041), which is in the process of being transposed and pursuant to Article 4 of which this Plan is adopted, expressly provides for due regard to be paid to national specificities when formulating measures to promote collective bargaining. In this regard, Recital 25 of the Preamble contains the following text: *‘The levels of collective bargaining coverage in Member States vary considerably due to a number of factors, including national traditions and practices, as well as historical context. This should be taken into account when analysing progress towards a wider coverage of collective bargaining, particularly with regard to the action plan provided for in this Directive.’*

Similarly, Recital 26 of the Preamble to the Council Recommendation of 12 June 2023 on strengthening social dialogue in the European Union states that that the Recommendation *‘encourages measures that are adapted to national traditions, norms and practices, thereby respecting national specificities as well as the autonomy of the social partners... Furthermore, the Recommendation takes into account the specific circumstances in Member States and acknowledges that the choice of individual measures for its implementation may be determined by those circumstances.’*

In the spirit of the cited provisions of international law and EC law, when improving the regulatory framework for collective bargaining in the country, account should be taken of the traditions of the Bulgarian legal system regarding the civil service, with its two main pillars — the hierarchical nature of the administrative legal relationship and the unity of the civil service. On the one hand, the administrative (hierarchical) nature of the civil service does not permit collective bargaining of the classical type in the civil service employment relationship, as is the case in the labour employment relationship, but rather, in the broader context of the term ‘social dialogue’, which also encompasses collective bargaining in labour relations⁴. On the other hand, its unity does not permit varying degrees of negotiation on the same elements of the civil service across different administrations.

⁴ ‘Social dialogue’, as defined in paragraph 1 of the definitions in the Council Recommendation of 12 June 2023 on strengthening social dialogue in the EC, ‘means all forms of negotiation, consultations or exchanges of information between or amongst representatives of governments, employers and workers on matters of common interest relating to economic, employment and social policies, which take place as bilateral relations between workers and employers, including collective bargaining, or as a tripartite process, in which the State is an official party to the dialogue, and may be informal or institutionalised, or a combination of both, taking place at national, regional or local level, or at enterprise level, at cross-sectoral or sectoral level, or at several of these levels simultaneously.’

3.3. Regulatory framework for collective bargaining for workers and employees in employment relationships

The legal framework for collective bargaining for workers and employees in employment relationships is set out in Chapter Four of the Labour Code. It clearly defines the subject matter of collective bargaining – matters relating to the employment and social security relations of workers and employees that are not regulated by mandatory provisions of the law. Furthermore, it stipulates that a collective labour agreement must not contain clauses that are less favourable to workers and employees than those laid down in the law or in a collective labour agreement to which the employer is bound. This ensures that collective labour agreements can build upon the minimum requirements of the legislation and negotiate more favourable working conditions for employees.

The Labour Code explicitly defines the levels at which collective labour agreements may be concluded: at enterprise, sector, industry and municipal levels. A distinctive feature is that only one collective labour agreement may be concluded at the enterprise, sector and industry levels. The procedure for initiating negotiations and the obligations of the employer or group of employers to conduct negotiations and provide information to the representatives of workers and employees are regulated. The labour inspection authorities are empowered to carry out inspections and impose administrative sanctions where the requirements of the Labour Code regarding negotiations and the provision of information are not met. The possibility, requirements and procedure for extending a collective labour agreement to sectoral and industry-wide levels are laid down in law.

The requirements for the conclusion and registration of collective labour agreements are regulated, with a provision that this must be done in a special register at the Labour Inspectorate. Requirements have also been established regarding the entry into force and duration of collective labour agreements, as well as their effect on individuals. The right of workers and employees to information regarding collective labour agreements concluded within the undertaking, by sector, industry or municipality, to which the employer is bound, is expressly provided for, as is the right to bring claims for non-performance and for the declaration of invalidity of collective labour agreements.

3.4. Regulatory framework for collective bargaining for civil servants

The regulatory framework for collective bargaining for civil servants is considerably more limited in scope. Article 44(1) of the Civil Servants Act establishes the right of civil servants to freely form trade unions, to join and to terminate their membership of them, subject only to their statutes. These organisations are granted the right to represent and defend the interests of civil servants before state authorities on matters of employment and **social security** relations through legally defined instruments — by means of proposals, requests and participation in the drafting of internal rules and regulations relating to employment relations.

In 2016, an amendment to the Civil Servants Act provided for an agreement between trade unions of civil servants and the Council of Ministers, the structure, scope and forms of cooperation are to be regulated, with the procedure for concluding the agreement and the

criteria for trade unions to be determined by a regulation of

the Council of Ministers (Article 46a(1) and (2) of the Civil Servants Act). Paragraph 3 of Article 46a adds a further mechanism for the trade union protection of civil servants — all draft legislative acts relating to employment relationships must be agreed with the trade union organisations of civil servants.

In the spirit of the unity of the civil service and the state administration, the legislator also provides for a single agreement at central level concerning the structure, scope and forms of cooperation between the state and the trade union organisations of civil servants. The agreement should not create conditions for differentiation (unequal treatment) between employees in the public administration on the basis of membership of trade unions. Furthermore, the scope of issues covered by the agreement must not conflict with mandatory provisions of civil service legislation. The development of criteria for trade union organisations should be carried out following discussion and consideration of the views and arguments of all interested parties who have a substantial interest, possess the relevant information and are involved in implementation. As a measure under this Plan, it is envisaged that this regulation will be developed in cooperation with trade union organisations.

It should be noted that, in the context of social dialogue and, in particular, collective bargaining, given the lack of an explicit distinction in most EC acts between the private and public sectors, as well as between employment and service relationships in the public sector, the term ‘agreement’ is established and relevant, including in the aforementioned Council Recommendation on strengthening social dialogue and Directive (EC) 2022/2041.

Notwithstanding the limited regulatory framework on collective bargaining in the civil service sector and in the absence of the regulation provided for in Article 46a of the Civil Service Act, practice shows that separate agreements are concluded in the various administrations on matters of employment and social security relations, pursuant to Article 44(3) of the Civil Service Act. These agreements cover a limited range of issues relating to the working conditions and employment of civil servants which are not governed by mandatory provisions.

In view of the above and given the specific features of national legislation, dialogue with trade union organisations on issues of a horizontal nature for the civil service should be further developed through legislation, with good practices in trade union activity within the civil service being harmonised and improved on the basis of the regulatory framework.

3.5. Settlement of collective labour disputes

The Collective Labour Disputes Settlement Act (CLDSA) establishes the procedure for settling collective labour disputes between employees and employers on matters relating to labour and social security relations and living standards. It regulates both procedural matters for the settlement of disputes and substantive legal provisions governing the rights and obligations in the event of a collective labour dispute, including in relation to the right to strike. The amendments to the Collective Labour Disputes Act (CLDA) of 2001 created a legal provision whereby, in the event of a collective labour dispute arising between workers and employers, where no agreement is reached or one of the parties refuses to negotiate, for either party to seek assistance in resolving it through mediation and/or arbitration by the National Institute for Conciliation and Arbitration (NICA). The status of NICA is also regulated as

a legal entity under the Minister of Labour and Social Policy with the status of an executive agency, authorised to facilitate the voluntary settlement of collective labour disputes between workers and employers. The status and powers of the sole arbitrator and the arbitration commission are also set out, as are the procedure and time limits for the consideration of arbitration disputes before the NIPA. The main objective of the Collective Labour Disputes Act is to regulate mechanisms for the civilised settlement of collective labour disputes, with priority given to the search for mutually acceptable solutions. In this regard, priority in the resolution of collective labour disputes is given to methods of voluntary settlement, namely direct negotiations, mediation and labour arbitration. The NIPA, which is a tripartite body, plays a key role in this process.

The amendments to Article 14 of the Collective Labour Agreements Act of 2006 regulate the possibility of holding a strike, including in the ‘healthcare’ and ‘energy’ sectors, provided that certain requirements (the so-called ‘essential services’) are met. An obligation has been established for the parties to a collective labour agreement to reach an agreement and to ensure conditions for the performance, during a strike, of activities of significant public interest, and in the event of an inability to reach an agreement, it provides for so-called compulsory arbitration by the National Institute for Labour Arbitration (NILA) to determine the minimum services.

3.6. Institutional framework

The Council of Ministers is the central collegial body of the executive branch with general competence. It cooperates with the governing bodies of trade unions and employers’ organisations. Under Article 46a(1) of the Civil Service Act, the Council of Ministers is required to participate directly in the social dialogue concerning the civil service by concluding the prescribed agreement with the trade union organisations of civil servants.

The Minister of Labour and Social Policy is a central, single-person body of **the executive branch** with **specific competence to** direct, coordinate and **oversee** the implementation of state policy in the field of labour relations and **matters** directly related **thereto** (including collective **bargaining**), **social security relations**, as well as matters **relating to the standard of living, in cooperation with and** following consultation with the representative organisations of workers and employees and of employers. An important power of the Minister in relation to collective bargaining is the ability to extend the scope of collective agreements to all enterprises in a sector or industry, following a request from the parties.

The National Council for Tripartite Cooperation (HCTC) is an advisory body to the Council of Ministers, comprising representatives of the government and the representative organisations of workers and employees and of employers. The HCTC discusses and issues opinions on draft laws and other legislative acts relating to labour and social security relations, which directly influences the framework and content of collective agreements. Representative organisations of workers and employees and of employers at national level are encouraged to make efforts to develop social dialogue and cooperation, which contribute to the consolidation of **collective bargaining**.

Workers’ and employees’ organisations and employers’ organisations represent and defend their interests through collective bargaining, participation in tripartite cooperation and other actions in accordance with the law. Collective labour agreements in

enterprises are concluded between the employer and the trade union organisations within the enterprise. Sectoral and industry-wide collective labour agreements are concluded between the relevant representative organisations of workers and employees and employers.

NIPA facilitates the voluntary settlement of collective labour disputes, collects and analyses data on collective bargaining and disputes, and publishes an annual report on collective bargaining in the Republic of Bulgaria.

The General Labour Inspectorate Agency (GLIA), through its regional Labour Inspectorate Directorates, registers collective labour agreements and supplementary agreements thereto in special registers. The GIT monitors compliance with labour legislation, which includes the fulfilment of employers' obligations to negotiate and provide information.

4. Status and trends in collective bargaining in the Republic of Bulgaria*

4.1. Number of collective agreements

In analysing the state of collective bargaining in the country, data on concluded *Collective Labour Agreements* (CLAs), regulating the rights of **workers** under employment relationships, as well as *Agreements under the Civil Servants Act* (ACA), have been examined. Given that the purpose of CLAs and CAA is relatively similar — the collective regulation of labour rights and the protection of the rights of workers and employees/civil servants vis-à-vis employers/state bodies on matters of labour/service **and social security relations**, the study covers both types of agreements, using the collective term 'collective agreements' (CA).

For the period from 2011 to the end of 2024, a total of 20,566 CAs and annexes thereto have been concluded, only some of which are currently in force. The term 'active CAs' covers sectoral collective agreements (SCAs) and sectoral collective agreements for civil servants (SCACS) as of a specific date, the term of which has not expired or the agreed term has been extended by an annex.

As of 31 December 2024, a total of 1,497 collective agreements in force at that time at the 'enterprise' level and within the structures of the state administration were entered in the register of the General Labour Inspectorate Executive Agency. The analysis shows that 6 of the collective agreements do not meet the legal requirement that one of the parties be a trade union organisation, insofar as they have been concluded between an employer and an 'employee'; a 'workers' representative'; an 'employees' representative' or 'authorised **representatives of the workforce**'.

During the period 2011–2024, a clear downward trend was observed in the number of active collective agreements at enterprise level. In 2011, their number stood at 2,084, and by 2024 it had fallen to 1,497. This represents a decline of around 30%.

The data show a significant reduction in the number of collective agreements in the private sector. This is due to changes in the structure of enterprises, reduced union density and **lower commitment on the part of some** employers. At the same time, in the public sector, and more specifically in **the civil service, a gradual increase** is observed — from 112 active collective agreements in 2011 to 176 in 2024. The upward trend in collective agreements has been **consistent in recent years**.

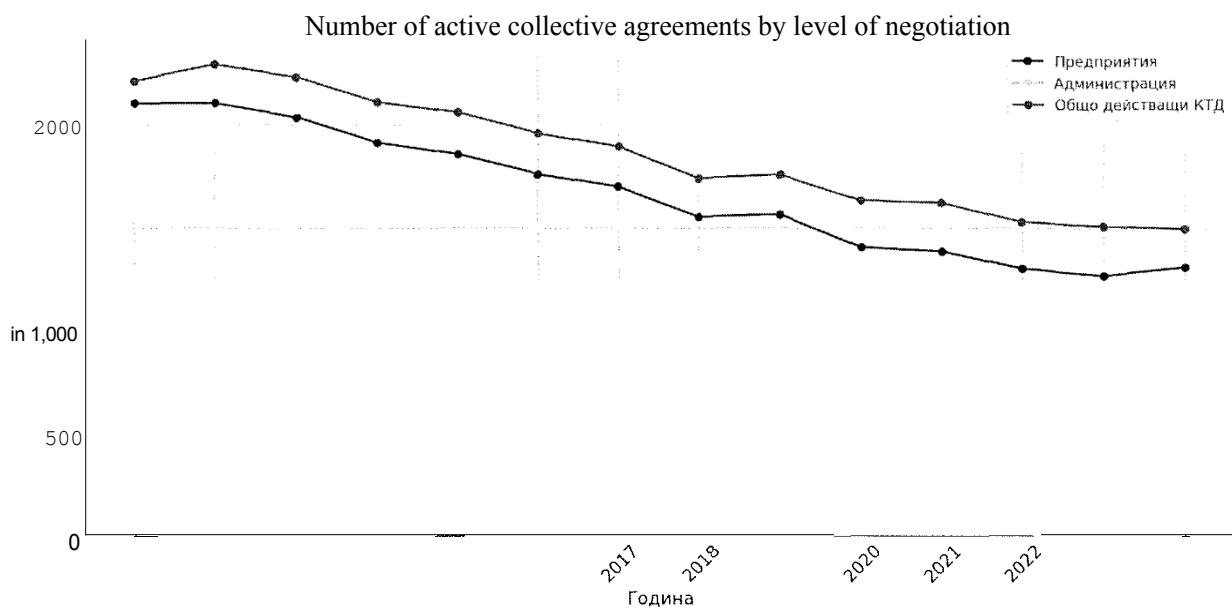
* The database from the HSHA information system was used as a source of information

At sectoral level, the number of agreements is trending downwards, despite the relatively small number of collective agreements concluded — from 21 in 2011 to 15 in 2024. For municipal agreements, the trend is not clearly defined — the number of active collective agreements varies between 48 and 63, with 58 in force by the end of 2024.

The total number of active collective agreements is an indicator of the overall state of collective bargaining and shows a clear downward trend: from 2,153 in 2011 to 1,497 in 2024, with the highest figure in 2012 (2,290) and a steady decline thereafter.

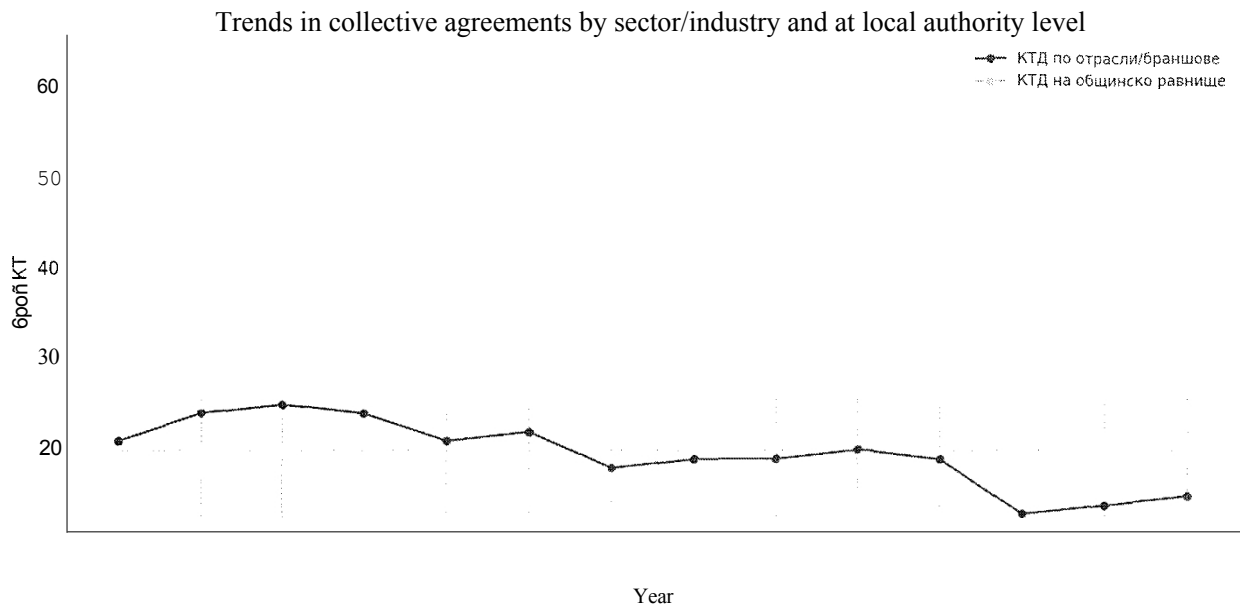
A total of 897 collective agreements were concluded in 2024, whilst 298 annexes to existing collective agreements were concluded. The vast majority of these (80% of the total) were concluded for the maximum permissible term of two years. A significant difference is observed in the ratio of collective agreements concluded during the period under review between public and private sector enterprises.

Of the total 897 collective agreements concluded in 2024, 807 were at enterprise level, 7 were sectoral/industry-wide, and 83 were at municipal level. Despite an increase of nearly 10 percentage points in the growth rate of concluded agreements and annexes for 2023 compared to the previous year at the ‘enterprise’ level, in 2024 the overall trend towards a decrease in their number persists. In the public administration, the trend is the opposite — there is a significant increase in the number of agreements concluded for civil servants, with growth also observed in the number of collective agreements and annexes concluded.



The downward trend in the number of employment contracts is evident not only at company level but also at sector and industry level, although a slight increase was **recorded** in 2024. At the municipal level, the number of collective agreements concluded during the period remains stable, with a positive trend towards an increase in their number again in 2024. The total number of active **collective agreements** and agreements in **the country** at the end of each year is **gradually** decreasing. Nevertheless, for 2024, an increase is **reported** compared to the **previous** year. **The total number of all collective agreements/sectoral agreements by level of negotiation increases by 3.4 percentage points,**

with collective agreements up by 3.2 percentage points and sectoral agreements by 6.7 percentage points.



The trend in the number of collective agreements in force at ‘sector/industry’ level is also negative, despite the increase over the last three years. At the municipal level of bargaining, the number of collective agreements for activities funded by the municipal budget has consistently remained above the level reached in 2011, with a 20.8 percentage point increase in 2024 compared to 2011.

It should be noted that the social partners do not show mutual interest in the mechanism for extending collective bargaining, as it is used very sparingly. Extension is traditionally sought and implemented solely in respect of workers in the brewing sector. At present, this is the only sectoral collective labour agreement in force that has been extended by order of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy.

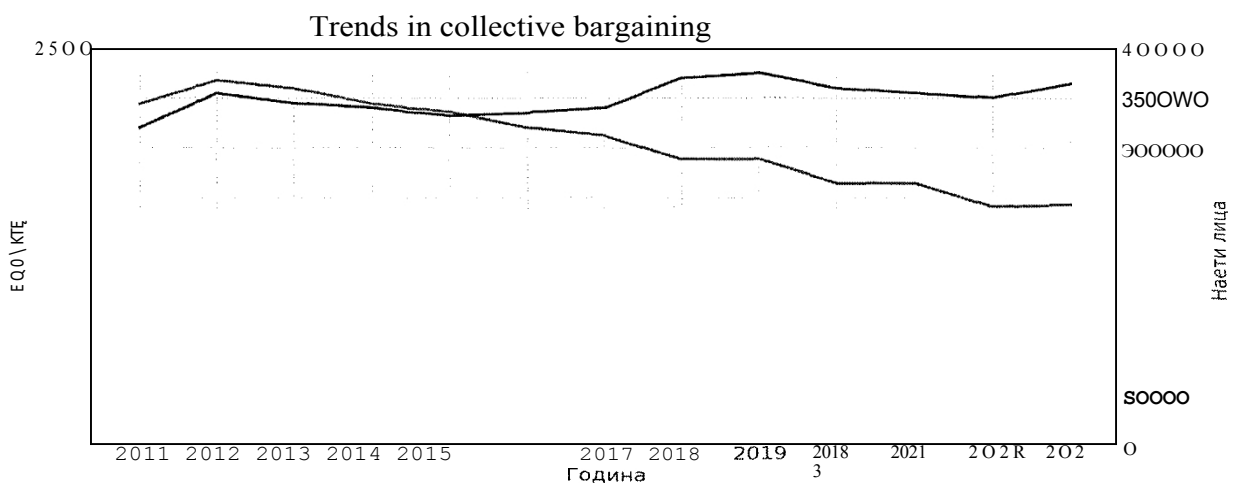
Data for the period 2010–2024 show that the highest number of agreements concluded at ‘enterprise’ level is in education, healthcare and the manufacturing industry. In the sector conventionally defined as the ‘real’ sector — agriculture, industry and trade — the agreements and annexes concluded averaged 27.9% over the period under review, whilst in the sector defined as ‘publicly funded’ — education, healthcare, public administration and culture — concluded contracts accounted for an average of 72.1%. In the industrial sector, on average for the period 2010–2024, over half of the contracts and annexes concluded were in the manufacturing industry, with the extractive industry and energy each accounting for a similar share of around 10%, whilst contracts concluded in enterprises in the water sector reach 18%. Their relative share is smallest in construction — 5%. These figures are also confirmed by the breakdown of concluded contracts by economic activity, with the largest share being in the ‘Education’ sector (365), followed by ‘Human health and social work’ (212), with the ‘Public administration’ sector (100) coming in third.

4.2. Coverage in terms of the persons to whom the collective agreements apply

Contrary to the trend of a decrease in the total number of collective agreements during the period 2011–

2023, there has been an overall increase in the number of employees covered by active collective agreements.

In 2011, the number of persons covered by collective bargaining was 324,557. By 2012, this had risen to 361,783, followed by a slight decline and stabilisation at around 345–348 thousand during the period 2013–2015. After 2016, the number began to rise again, reaching a peak of 377,919 people in 2019. Despite a short-term decline during the pandemic year of 2020, the overall level remains high and stands at 370,110 in 2023, which is close to the level prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. This indicates sustained activity in collective bargaining and its coverage of employees, particularly in recent years.



When broken down by sector, the number of employees in the private sector is the most significant. In 2011, there were 290,182, rising to 329,472 by 2012. There was then a slight decline until 2016, when the figure fell to 299,324. Between 2018 and 2021, this figure remained stable at around 292,000–274,000, but in 2023 a record increase was recorded. This is due to the conclusion of larger collective agreements or the inclusion of major employers in the collective bargaining system.

According to NIPA data, by the end of 2024 a total of 370,110 workers and employees were covered by collective agreements in force, representing 15.6% of the country's total workforce.

In the public sector, the number of people covered started at 34,375 in 2011 and underwent moderate fluctuations. Between 2013 and 2017, a sharp increase was observed – from around 40,000 to over 84,000 people. Following this period, coverage in the public administration sector remained stable until 2023, when 83,125 people were covered. This indicates a strengthening of collective bargaining in the public sector, particularly after 2016.

By the end of 2024, compared with the 2011 base year, the number of employees covered by current collective agreements and sectoral agreements had increased by 11.4 percentage points, although a decrease of 1.7 percentage points was recorded compared with the previous year. More significant is the decrease in the number of employees covered by

collective agreements in enterprises: -2.1 percentage points. In the public administration sector, the significant increase in the number of employees covered by collective agreements and sectoral collective agreements after 31 December 2018, compared with previous years, is due to an agreement signed for employees in the Ministry of Public Administration, with their numbers remaining stable in recent years. There is a decline in the number of employees covered by the CLA for 2024 compared to

2023 in the civil service by 3.8 percentage points, whilst there is an increase in the coverage of the SDSL by 1.5 percentage points.

IV. KEY FINDINGS AND CHALLENGES FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Collective bargaining is a process in which the state cannot and should not have direct involvement, given the principle of respecting the autonomy of the social partners. In this regard, the state should support and encourage the social partners, but not take over their functions. Consequently, the main challenge facing collective bargaining is the adoption of coordinated measures by all stakeholders — workers' and employees' organisations, employers' organisations and the state.

The general trend in most industrialised countries is a decline in the level of collective bargaining and a narrowing of its scope. Despite established traditions and the development of the regulatory framework in this area, a sustained trend towards a reduction in the number of collective agreements concluded is also observed in Bulgaria. A positive development is the maintenance and even slight increase in the number of people covered, despite the reduction in the number of collective agreements concluded.

A key challenge facing collective bargaining in the country is increasing its coverage among workers in the MSE sector. The highest average share of 87.4% for the period 2011–2023 is recorded in negotiations for the conclusion of collective agreements in large enterprises/administrative structures. At the same time, the relative share of employees in small enterprises/administrative structures in the economy is the highest — 86.2% — which is one of the reasons for the comparatively lower coverage of collective bargaining in the country. The low participation of micro-enterprises in collective bargaining, which account for over 90% of all firms in Bulgaria, indicates a systemic deficit in social dialogue at this level. In these enterprises, there is often no trade union presence, which severely limits the possibility of concluding a collective agreement at enterprise level.

Given the structure of enterprises and the country's economy, a major challenge to expanding the scope of collective bargaining is the low level of bilateral social dialogue at sectoral and industry level. This limits the scope for expanding collective bargaining, as it makes it almost impossible to cover workers in SMEs, particularly in micro-enterprises, through collective bargaining.

Without an increase in the number of sectoral and industry-level collective agreements concluded, a vast majority of workers will continue to remain outside the scope of collective bargaining. A real increase in the coverage of collective bargaining can be achieved primarily by revitalising sectoral and industry-level collective bargaining. Significant progress in this regard can be achieved if trade unions and employers' organisations are mutually willing to increase the number of

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS.

The limited applicability of sectoral and industry-wide agreements is also due to differences in the representativeness of workers' and employees' organisations and, correspondingly, of employers' organisations across different sectors. There is a particularly strong presence of trade union organisations in the public sector, for example in 'Education' and 'Healthcare', but a relatively weak presence in the real sector, with the exception of the traditionally well-unionised 'Industry' sector. The level of collective bargaining in the

of services is very low, even though the number of employees in this sector is significant. In this regard, maintaining up-to-date and timely information on the sectoral and industry structures of recognised workers' and employers' organisations can have a positive impact on the revitalisation of sectoral social dialogue.

An additional factor relevant to the level of collective bargaining is the development of society and the economy, in particular the wider use of modern information and communication technologies, which are giving rise to 'new forms of employment'. There is a clear need to introduce a legal framework that clearly defines these new forms of employment and outlines the possibility for those employed in them to be included within the scope of collective bargaining.

The regulatory framework should be clear and comprehensive, allowing for constructive, fair and transparent social dialogue, and facilitating the process of concluding collective agreements and registering the collective labour agreements concluded. In this regard, it is necessary to further develop the legal framework governing collective bargaining in the public administration. The process of improving the legal framework also involves the more effective application of established international standards in the field of social dialogue.

In view of the increasingly widespread use of digital technologies, it is justified to introduce regulatory changes to enable negotiations, the conclusion of collective labour agreements and their registration to be carried out by digital means. This will also serve as a basis for extending coverage to new forms of employment, where traditional work on the employer's premises is becoming increasingly rare.

Access to information, good practices and analyses by workers' and employers' organisations is key to enhancing the capacity to conduct negotiations and conclude collective agreements. In this regard, the state should take the necessary measures to support the capacity-building of the social partners, including through funding under the terms of the Operational Programme 'Human Resources Development' 2021–2027, publishing the necessary information on a publicly accessible online platform, and by conducting targeted training.

In addition to the provision of information by the state, it is necessary to **ensure** that employers comply with their obligations to engage in negotiations and provide the necessary information to trade unions. In this regard, the supervisory bodies of the General Labour Inspectorate (GLI) should continue their active efforts when they receive reports of breaches of labour legislation.

Workers' and employers' organisations play a key role in collective bargaining. Therefore, the active work carried out by representative organisations to promote collective bargaining among their members is the key factor through which a real impact can be achieved in encouraging collective bargaining.

V. STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The vision of the Plan for the Promotion of Collective Bargaining 2026–2030 is to improve the well-being of workers through collective bargaining.

In this regard, measures will be implemented to achieve the Strategic Objective ‘Increasing the coverage of collective bargaining’.

The strategic objective will be implemented and monitored through indicators for the implementation of specific measures to promote collective bargaining, which are divided into two categories — legislative and non-legislative. The main objective is to increase the coverage of collective bargaining, which is to reach twenty per cent by the end of the period.

The legislative measures relate to the improvement of national legislation in the field of collective bargaining:

- Amendments to the Labour Code: The aim is to regulate new forms of work (e.g. digital platforms) and the possibility for those employed in them to participate in collective bargaining, as well as to improve the requirements relating to collective bargaining, including the possibility of concluding collective agreements electronically.

- Amendments to the Civil Servants Act and drafting of a regulation under Article 46a of the Act: This is aimed at improving the regulatory framework for collective bargaining for civil servants.

- Alignment with international standards in the field of collective bargaining: The ratification of ILO Conventions in the field of collective bargaining is an opportunity for the state to demonstrate its commitment to this issue.

- Improving the mechanism for resolving collective labour disputes: Developing amendments to the Collective Labour Disputes Act to facilitate the resolution of collective labour disputes in a manner mutually acceptable to the parties.

Non-legislative measures focus the efforts of the social partners and various state institutions on taking concrete action to increase the coverage of collective bargaining.

- Enhancing the capacity of the social partners and institutions, to be achieved through:

Training and seminars: Conducting training programmes for representatives of trade unions and employers’ organisations on collective bargaining.

Methodological support: Development of guidelines, good practices and methodologies for more effective collective bargaining.

Consultations: Providing expert advice to the parties involved in the negotiation process.

- Promoting collective bargaining and increasing coverage, to be achieved through:

Promoting sectoral and industry-wide bargaining: Activities aimed at supporting and encouraging the conclusion of collective agreements at sectoral and industry level, leading to wider coverage.

Information campaigns: Raising awareness among the public, employers and workers of the benefits of collective bargaining.

Analyses and studies: Preparing reports and analyses on the state of and trends in collective bargaining to serve as a basis for future decisions.

Effective enforcement action in cases of breaches of labour legislation.

VI. MEASURES TO PROMOTE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING 2026–2030

№	Billion	Description of the measure	Lead/supporting institution/organisation	Implementation period	Expected result	Performance indicators			Required funds / Source of funding
						Description of the indicator	Current value	Target value	
			I.	LEGISLATIVE	MEASURES				
1.		Regulation of new forms of employment and the possibility for those employed in them to participate in collective bargaining; provision for the conclusion and registration of collective labour agreements electronically; regulation of an electronic register of collective labour agreements.	MTCP / social partners	2026	An improved legal framework for collective labour agreements; inclusion within the scope of collective bargaining of persons employed in new forms of work; reduction of the administrative burden	Draft Law on Collective Agreements	0	1	Within the budget of the MTCP
2.		clarification of the delegation under the Civil Service Act a regulation governing Cooperation between the Council of Council and the trade organisations of civil servants	AMC	2026–2027	Clarified Regulation on cooperation between the Cabinet Council and trade unions organisations of civil servants	Draft Amendment to	0	1	Within the framework of AMC

3.	Drafting of draft regulations pursuant to Article 46a(2) of the Civil Servants Act	Drafting of a regulation governing cooperation between the Council of Ministers and the trade unions of civil servants on the basis of the specific delegation in Article 46a of the Civil Service Act	AMC	2028	Detailed regulations on cooperation between the Council of Ministers and trade unions representing civil servants	Draft regulation under Article 46a of the Civil Servants Act	0	1	Within the framework of the budget of AMC
4.	Ratification of ILO Convention No. 151 on labour relations in the public sector, 1978	Adherence to established international standards on collective bargaining for public servants	MTCP / AMC	2026	Enhancing legal certainty in the field of collective bargaining for civil servants through the application of established international standards	Draft Act on the ratification	0	1	Within the the budget of the responsible INSTITUTIONS
5.	Ratification of Convention No. 154 of the ILO on collective bargaining, 1981	Adherence to established international standards in the field of collective bargaining	MTCP / social partners	2026	Enhancing legal certainty in the field of collective bargaining through the application of established international standards	Draft Act on the ratification	0	1	Within the the MTCP budget

6.	Development of draft PMC to amend and supplement the Regulation on the procedure for establishing the criteria for representativeness of workers' and employees' organisations and employers	Improvement of the procedure and method for proving the criteria for representativeness	MTCP / social partners	2027	Legal certainty in establishing the terms and conditions for determining the existence of representativeness criteria, which will ensure transparency regarding the parties to collective bargaining at sectoral/industry level	Draft PMC for amending and supplementing the Ordinance on the procedure for establishing the criteria for representativeness of workers' and employees' organisations and employers	0	1	Within the budget of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
7.	Drafting of a draft law amending and supplementing the Collective Labour Disputes Settlement Act (ZID ZVKT S)	Improvement of the mechanism for the settlement of collective labour disputes	MTCP / social partners / ННПА	By 2030	More effective resolution of collective labour disputes, prioritising voluntary methods of their resolution	Draft Draft the ZUKTS	0	1	Within the the MTCP budget
			II.NE Z	LEGISLATIVE	MEASURES				
8.	Organisation of thematic forums on social dialogue and collective bargaining in economic sectors in which	Organising meetings between representatives of sectoral and industry-specific organisations of workers and employees and of employers in economic	sectors and trade organisations and the relevant ministries	2026 — 2030	Increasing motivation for collective bargaining by sector and industry	Number of meetings organised	0	6	Within the budget of OTFOBOJEHPTO organisations and INST INSTITUTIONS

	there are no active collective TQ DOWN AGREEMENT]EP	activities where there is no a collective labour agreement in force, with the aim of discussing issues arising during negotiations and raising interest in collective bargaining							
9.	Enhancing the capacity of trade union and employer organisations through training	Practical training for employer and trade union representatives, aimed at building skills in negotiating collective agreements; pay structures; the benefits of collective bargaining; and the resolution of disputes.	Social partners, HIDIA	2026 — 2030	Enhanced capacity for collective bargaining	Number training sessions held	0	60	Within the the organisations' budget, including through funding under the terms of the Operational Programme 'Human Resources Development' 2021–2027
10.	Establishment of a new register of collective TQ DOVI CONTRACT]EI	Establishment and maintenance of an electronic register of collective TQ DOVI AGREEMENTS AND agreements for civil servants as part of the NIPA information system	НИПА, TARGET partners	2030	Reducing administrative burden. Ensuring reliable and timely information OTHOI2HO collective bargaining.	Electronic register	0	1	Operational programme 'Human Resources Development' 2021–2027

11.	Development of Methodology for measuring the coverage of collective agreements	Development of methodology to determine the procedure and method for collecting statistical data and information by sector and industry, as well as for determining the scope of collective agreements	НИПА/ НСИ/ МТСП / Social partners	2030	Providing information on the scope of collective bargaining and enabling analysis of challenges and good practices.	Developed methodology	0	1	Within the organisations' budgets
12.	Development of a methodology for the quantitative forecasting of the effects of industrial action to resolve collective disputes	Development of an econometric model, indicators and algorithms for the calculation, testing and implementation of a mechanism for calculating losses from collective labour disputes, including strikes, with a view to determining the negative impacts at enterprise, sector/industry and national level.	НИПА/ НЧН/ social partners	2028	Promoting collective bargaining through the prevention and assessment of the effects of collective labour disputes and industrial action	Developed methodology Online calculator created	0 0	1 1	Within the budget of HIDIA and funding from the Operational Programme 'Human Resources Development' 2021–2027
13.	Publication of annual reports on collective bargaining and collective labour disputes	Preparation and publishing on the HHPA website of annual reports tracking trends and challenges	НИПА	2026–2030	Raising awareness of collective bargaining and collective labour disputes	Number of reports published	0	8	Within the framework of the approved budget НИПА

		in connection with collective bargaining and collective labour disputes							
14.	Establishment of units within employers' and workers' organisations to promote collective bargaining	Establishing units within the social partner organisations recognised as representative at national level, to provide support and methodological GUIDANCE PJEI negotiations for the conclusion of collective agreements Publication on the websites of the organisations of contact details for the units	Social Partners	2026	Provision of support during negotiations for the conclusion of collective labour agreements. Reducing collective labour disputes.	Number of units <i>in</i> employers' and workers' organisations	0	6	Within the the organisations' budget
15.	Publication on the websites of the social partners of a list of the sectoral and industry organisations that are their members	Publication on the website of each of the employers' and workers' organisations recognised as representative at national level, of a list of the sectoral and industry organisations that are their members	Social partners	2026	Availability of up-to-date public information on the sectoral and industry organisations that are authorised to negotiate collective agreements at sectoral or industry level	Published lists	0	6	Within the the organisations' budget

16.	Training of mediators and arbitrators for the settlement of collective labour disputes, as well as experts from the social partners in ASSISTANCE TO the parties in negotiations on collective bargaining.	Conducting training for individuals included on the list of mediators and arbitrators in the process of resolving collective labour disputes.	НИПА	2026–2030	Building capacity for resolving collective labour disputes.	Number of people	0	5	Within the budget of НИПА
17.	Organisation of an information campaign to promote the benefits of the CBA	Development of an effective communication strategy and conducting an information campaign to promote, among the public and the media, the benefits for workers and employees, as well as for employers, of collective bargaining.	Social partners	2028	Promoting of collective bargaining and raising public awareness of its benefits. Increasing motivation to conclude collective AGREEMENTS.	Number information campaigns conducted	0	1	Within the the organisations' budget
18.	Development of a collective bargaining handbook	Development of guides on collective bargaining, to include information on how to conduct negotiations and sample questions that may be	Social partners/ НИПА	2027	Support for the collective bargaining process AGREEMENTS AND promoting collective	Number guidelines	0	2	Within the the organisations' budget

		subject to collective negotiation, including model clauses for CBA with regard to environmental standards, remote working, artificial intelligence and			negotiation. Support for participants in negotiations representatives of employers and trade unions.				
19.	Organising collective bargaining days	Organising events to showcase best practices and challenges facing collective bargaining	Social partners	2026 — 2030	Promoting collective bargaining among members of organisations by holding forums and DISSHI	Number of events	0	2	Within the the budget of the organisations
20.	Control over the implementation of the obligation to the employer to negotiate and provision information trade union organisations	Implementation of effective control for compliance with the requirements for negotiation and for provision of information on each received signal	IA GNT	2026 - 2030	Establishment of guarantees for implementation of the obligations of the parties in the process of collective Labour negotiation	% realised inspections by reports	100	100	Within the framework of the budget the General Labour Inspectorate