

# Call for tenders to subcontract an expert or a group of experts to draft a study on the challenges and paths to a well-functioning Social Dialogue and social partnership in Central Europe

This is a call for a subcontractor to provide expertise with a view to support the activities of the Central European Trade Union Network (CETUN). More specifically, this call for tenders relates to the drafting of a study and a policy brief on the challenges and paths to a well-functioning Social Dialogue and social partnership in Central Europe.

CETUN will publish the call on its website, on 16/09/2024, and keep it online for 28 calendar days (deadline for submission of bids: 14/10/2024).

## 1. Background information on the project

Trade Unions in Central Europe face a set of different challenges and have a broad range of levels of social dialogue involvement. For a deeper analysis of the situation, a study should be carried out focussing on the impact of EU social policy as well as cross-border trade union activities.

The Central European Trade Union Network (CETUN) assembles trade unions from Austria, Croatia, Czechia, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland. As a regional grouping of ETUC members, the network's goal is to foster trade union structures and social dialogue in the region. Through greater cooperation and coordination, participants aspire to promote common themes at European level. Since 2024, CETUN is co-funded by the European Union. The study is to be carried out as part of the EU-funded project.

## 2. Tasks to be performed by the subcontractor

The subcontractor will be entrusted with the drafting of a study on the challenges and paths to a well-functioning Social Dialogue and social partnership in Central Europe. The study shall be concluded by 3 November 2025 and present a structured report of around 60 pages<sup>1</sup>, in English, in accessible format including e.g. lists, indicators and charts.

The subcontractor will conduct comprehensive desk research to collect relevant data, which will form the foundation of the study. This stage is crucial for compiling and organising data to establish a robust framework for analysing social dialogue and challenges to its effectiveness in Central Europe.

### Interviews

The subcontractor will conduct interviews with representatives from CETUN trade union organisations and stakeholders in the region to gain insights into the social dialogue landscape. This primary data will complement the desk research, providing a deeper understanding of the issues at hand.

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<sup>1</sup> Up to a maximum of 80 pages, including case studies, but excluding annexes.

Please note that while it is up to the expert to choose whether to conduct the interviews in person or online, CETUN will not reimburse travel for interviews and thus the costs will have to be covered by the fee.

### **Development of Country Reports**

Based on the results of the desk research and interviews, the subcontractor will draft detailed country reports. These reports will undergo a feedback process where CETUN members discuss the findings and provide inputs. The subcontractor will incorporate this feedback, conducting additional interviews if necessary, to ensure the reports are comprehensive and accurate.

### **Study: Mapping Social Dialogue in Central Europe**

In a first part, the subcontractor will undertake a thorough examination of social dialogue in Central Europe, focusing on regional differences and similarities. This task includes assessing the impact of EU social and employment policies. The study will evaluate past outcomes and the current state of social dialogue in the region, including the effects of cross-border mobility.

In a second part, the study shall explore possible solutions and provide recommendations for improving social dialogue in CETUN countries, making it effective as well as achieving 80 % collective bargaining coverage as targeted by the Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages. In addition, the benefits of cross-border trade union cooperation shall be considered.

### **Policy Briefs**

The subcontractor will summarize the study's findings into a concise policy brief. This document will highlight the key findings and provide practical recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders. The policy brief will serve as a tool for decision-makers to take well-founded and concrete measures to address the challenges identified in the study.

### **Presentation at Final Conference**

To disseminate the study's findings, the subcontractor will prepare a comprehensive presentation for the final conference. This presentation will involve coordinating with CETUN to ensure a smooth delivery and exchange with conference attendees to discuss the implications of the study and gather additional feedback.

### **Further specifications**

The subcontractor will ensure the proof-reading, editing, layout and publication of the finalised study.

In consultation with the CETUN Steering Committee, the subcontractor will develop a structure to be followed for the presentation of each part of the study, its key findings and recommendations, so as to ensure a coherent and practical approach.

The final outcome of the study shall serve as a tool for trade unionists, negotiators and workers' representatives, notably by: equipping them with a narrative to bring the issue of effective social dialogue to the negotiation table at national and European level; providing them with concrete examples of demands and issues to raise in the negotiations; offering inspiring examples of success stories from various sectors relating to effective social dialogue, and finally; identifying lessons learnt with a view to formulate recommendations on what to bear in mind for ensuring an effective social dialogue at national level.

## **3. Expertise, experience and skills required**

A successful bidder will be required to demonstrate sound expertise on the following areas:

Experience:

- Carrying out in-depth political, economic, social and legal research on labour related topics;
- Producing practical/pragmatic and comprehensible material for a non-research related public;
- Writing research reports containing analysis of legal frameworks;
- Successful track record of delivering studies for similar projects, with EU institutions and/or European stakeholders (social partners, NGOs, etc.).

**Skills:**

- Proven research, drafting and presentation skills in English;
- Proven skills in drafting case study reports and interview templates;
- Ability to work within specified deadlines and to respect budgetary limits;
- Ability to work in a multicultural context (additional language skills are an asset) and understanding of different industrial relations systems, cultures and traditions in the countries covered by CETUN;
- Good administration and project management skills.

## 4. Time schedule and reporting

The subcontractor will be asked to perform the above-mentioned tasks by 3 November 2025.

The progress and development of the study will be closely followed and monitored through collaboration with the CETUN Steering Committee.

Feedback on the draft study will be collected from interviewees and any other stakeholders involved as considered appropriate by the CETUN Steering Committee.

The expert(s) will be required to present the final study at a CETUN event in early 2026.

## 5. Payment

The total maximum budget available for the fees of the subcontractor is as follows:

Contract with CETUN	
Main activities and Meetings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce a report of approximately 60 pages containing:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An introduction/foreword.</li> <li>○ A first section which will provide an overview and explanations of the country-specific differences in terms of union density and collective bargaining coverage.</li> <li>○ A second section focusing on recommendations and possible solutions for improving social dialogue and achieving 80 % collective bargaining coverage as targeted by the Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Produce a policy brief that summarises the study's findings and can serve as a support document for policy and decision makers.</li> <li>• Participate in meetings with the Steering Committee to discuss the evolution of the study and present the final version at a CETUN event.</li> </ul>	
<b>Total budget for the study</b>	<b>40 000 € (VAT and all taxes included)</b>

The subcontractor will be remunerated in various instalments (advance and final payment). This amount covers the fees but does not include the travel and subsistence costs incurred for attending project meetings (such as the CETUN event presenting the study). These will be

covered by CETUN on the basis of EU rules & thresholds (see the EC table of maximum amounts per EU member state).

## 6. Selection criteria

The selection criteria are:

- Verifiable expertise, experience and skills, as required and described in part 3 of this call;
- Quality of the methodology proposed in the offer;
- Understanding and sensibility of the political and socio-economic specificities in the region covered by CETUN;
- Proven track record of ensuring the quality of written materials produced, both in terms of content and format (i.e. previous publications), in the relevant subjects specified in this call for tenders;
- Price/Quality ratio;
- Previous research/work undertaken in the field of labour law and industrial relations, in particular in the field of working time and/or collective bargaining.

## 7. Form, structure and content of the tender

Tenders must be written in English. They must be signed by the tenderer or his duly authorised representative and be perfectly legible so that there can be no doubt as to words and figures. Tenders must be clear and concise and assembled in a coherent fashion.

Since tenderers will be judged on the content of their written bids, they must make it clear that they are able to meet the requirements of the specifications.

All tenders must include at least two sections:

### i) Technical proposal

The technical proposal must provide all the information needed for the purpose of awarding the contract, including:

- Specific information covering the technical and professional capacity, as required, in particular:
  - Description of relevant professional experience with emphasis on the specific fields covered by the invitation to tender;
  - Detailed curriculum vitae of key coordinator and of the other team members;
  - A selection of the main works and/or articles published by all the experts involved, in relation to the relevant subjects specified in this tender.
- A concept note sketching some preliminary reflections on the contents of the study.
- Specific information concerning the proposed methodology for delivering the tasks listed in part 2 of this call.

### ii) Financial proposal

Prices of the financial proposal must be quoted in euros, including if the subcontractor is based in a country which is not in the euro-area. As far as the tenderers of those countries are concerned, they cannot change the amount of the bid because of the evolution of the exchange rate. The tenderers choose the exchange rate and assume all risks or opportunities relating to the rate fluctuation.

Prices must be fixed amounts and shall not include travel expenses and daily allowances for the attendance of project events which will be covered by CETUN on the basis of EU rules and thresholds.

The maximum amount available for this contract is EUR 40.000 (VAT and all taxes included).

Prices shall be fixed and not subject to revision during the performance of the contract.

## 8. Award Criteria

The contract will be awarded to the tender offering the best value for money, taking into account the specific objectives, requirements and selection criteria of the tender. The principles of transparency and equal treatment will be respected with a view to avoiding any conflicts of interest.

## 9. Content and selection of the bids

**This call for tenders will be published on the CETUN website on 16/09/2024 and will be kept online for 28 calendar days. Offers must be sent at the latest on 14/10/2024.** Offers must be sent to CETUN in electronic format (by e-mail to [unions@cetun.eu](mailto:unions@cetun.eu)) and refer to our “Call for Tenders – CETUN Study”.

The offers will be presented to the CETUN Steering Committee. The committee will evaluate the tenders that have been deemed admissible. An evaluation report and classification of participation requests will be drawn up, dated and adopted by the committee.