

# Social Partnership on Wage Regulation in Ukraine's Public Sector

Regional and Local Studies  
Special Issue on Ukraine  
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ISSN 1509-4995

E-ISSN 2719-8049

doi: 10.7366/15094995s2304

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## Abstract

In the face of constant pandemic-related and military threats to citizens' right to work, collective bargaining has become almost the only real instrument to reconcile the interests of social partners and consolidate their efforts. The authors proposed a methodology for assessing the development of social partnership in the regulation of labour remuneration based on a set of indicators and a comparative analysis of the indicators in several public organisations: the State Audit Service of Ukraine, the State Treasury Service of Ukraine, the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine, the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, the Police of Ukraine, and the Pension Fund of Ukraine. Based on the challenges and general trends revealed by the results of the analysis, the authors identified areas for improving collective wage bargaining and the best practices in social partnership for their dissemination in public organisations.

## Keywords

social partnership, social dialogue, collective bargaining, labour remuneration, sectoral agreements

## Introduction

Social partnership is the most effective form of building industrial relations because it ensures the alignment of partners' interests, achieving social harmony and ensuring equality. Social partnership is the basis for building a democratic society, as well as an effective means of implementing social policy and reducing social conflicts.

Research results reveal the positive impact of social partnership and dialogue on economic growth (Uhlerová 2020), sustainable development (ILO 2017; Galgóczi 2020), working conditions, occupational safety and health (Lethbridge 2016; Obisi 2016; Kovač 2017), decent work (Tsymbaliuk et al. 2022), vocational training policy (Winterton 2006), and policies of diversity management (Cornet & Fatoux 2017).

Social dialogue contributes to the various objectives of sustainable development by improving working conditions, workers' rights, and equality at work; guaranteeing access to public services and redistribution; encouraging growth and innovation; supporting the environment and climate; and improving governance and participation (ILO 2017).

By analysing the social and labour relations in Ukraine, the practice of conducting social dialogue, the role of various parties in social partnership, and the structure and content of collective agreements, we can conclude that despite the common practice of conducting negotiations and concluding agreements, the institution of social partnership is only in its initial stage. Currently, social partnership is characterised by the underdevelopment of institutional features, and there are several problems in the negotiation process. For example, trade unions are weak as the representatives and defenders of employees' interests, and the state fails to fulfil its functions in the social partnership.

In Ukraine, the proportion of employees covered by collective agreements has declined. In 2008, 83.4% of employees were covered by collective agreements; in 2021, this indicator had

fallen to 70.2%. However, this level is still high compared to other countries due to the mandatory conclusion of a collective agreement at the industrial level.

It should be noted that the norms of Ukrainian labour legislation, particularly regarding social dialogue and the conclusion of collective agreements, apply to the labour relations of all enterprises, institutions, and organisations, regardless of the forms of ownership, type of activity, and sector of the economy. These norms apply to labour relations in the public sector as well. However, the Law of Ukraine “On Trade Unions, Their Rights and Guarantees of Activity” has some features in certain state bodies, particularly in the Armed Forces and the Police of Ukraine.

In Ukraine, collective agreements are concluded at various levels: national, regional, sectoral, and industrial (organisational). The conclusion of a collective agreement is mandatory only at the industrial level.

According to Article 4 of the Law of Ukraine “On Social Dialogue in Ukraine” (Parliament of Ukraine 2011), social dialogue can be implemented on a tripartite or bilateral basis. In the vast majority of private sectors of the economy, tripartism dominates. In the public sectors of the economy, social dialogue is implemented on a bilateral basis.

For social dialogue in the public sector, the state, represented by public authorities, acts as an employer. The employer role makes it impossible for the state to effectively perform other functions as an arbitrator, mediator, conciliator, and guarantor of the rights and freedoms of members of society. Therefore, it negatively affects social partnership and the participation of employees in social dialogue, as the state, in most cases, aims to protect its interests as an employer.

Employees' low level of trust in Ukrainian trade unions to represent their interests is not conducive to the development of social partnership and dialogue. According to a survey conducted by the Razumkov Center in March 2021, only 26.7% of respondents trust the unions, while 49.9% of respondents do not (Razumkov Center 2021).

The purpose of the study is to develop a method for assessing the development of social partnership in the regulation of labour remuneration (DSPRLR), evaluate the DSPRLR in the public sector in Ukraine, and determine the best practices in social partnership for their dissemination in public institutions and organisations.

Special attention was paid to structures that provide national defence (Armed Forces of Ukraine, State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, and Police of Ukraine), which are crucial in the current conditions of war. Thus, the employees of these structures, especially soldiers, must be protected by the state (as an employer). The state must ensure well-being, social security and other guarantees to employees and their families.

## Literature review

The study of social partnership in different European countries indicates that social dialogue is an essential instrument for innovative and healthy organisations (Euwema et al. 2015). For example, some research results confirm the positive impact of social dialogue and trade unions on wages and social security (Anzia and Moe 2015; Frandsen 2015; Hamermesh 2015; Hayter 2015; Riccucci et al. 2019), as well as reducing inequalities in wages and the gender pay gap (Card et al. 2020), including in the public sector (Antonie et al. 2015; Anastasiade and Tillé 2017; Yang and Jeong 2020). Comparative study results of the wage-bargaining systems in Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands find that calibration is an essential component of wage-bargaining systems, while greater subtlety is necessary concerning the role of the state (Dumka 2016).

Despite the positive impact of social dialogue and trade unions on economic growth, sustainable development, and the well-being of employees, research (Prosser and Perin 2015; Badigannavar 2017; Tsymbaliuk et al. 2019) shows a weakening of the role of social dialogue and trade unions in the regulation of industrial relations. Among the shortcomings of social partnership and dialogue, scientists distinguish legislation limitations and a lack of social dialogue traditions (Vallasek 2019), declining union density (Bernaciak 2015), and the existence of various national cultures in multinational companies (Buchner and Ilieva 2017).

Ukrainian scientists (Kolot 2018; Motsna 2019; Danylevych and Poplavska 2020) identify several problems inherent in social and labour relations and social partnership in Ukraine. These include

the dominance of paternalistic attitudes in the minds of Ukrainian citizens, the formal nature of the collective bargaining process, the dominance of employers in collective negotiations, and the low responsibility of social partners.

The primary problem that hinders social partnership is the low level of efficiency and trust in trade unions, which is observed not only in Ukraine but in various European countries as well, such as Great Britain (Heery 2002), Poland (Bernaciak 2017), Ireland, and Italy (Culpepper and Regan 2014).

The plethora of tripartite bodies in post-communist countries seems to suggest the development of a specific variant of East European corporatism. Analysis of the arrangements indicates that there is instead a prevalence of illusory corporatism. Nominal negotiations, non-mandatory agreements, and the elimination of most of the private sector from collective bargaining demonstrate that tripartite procedures are deployed to introduce neoliberal – not social democratic – outcomes (Ost 2000).

Despite the significant research interest in social dialogue's role in economic growth and sustainable development, tools and techniques for assessing social partnership and dialogue using quantitative methods remain underdeveloped.

To build typologies of industrial relations systems and labour markets in the European Union, Gardawski and Towalski (2019) use variables such as collective agreement coverage, trade union density, and government intervention in the sphere of industrial relations. Among indicators for assessing social partnership, Danylevych and Poplavska (2020) suggest considering wage potential to ensure not only the reproduction of labour but also professional development and the improvement of the quality of human capital.

A significant number of researchers (Marconi 2004; Depalo, Giordano and Papapetrou 2015; Gomes 2015; Morikawa 2016; Mahuteau et al. 2017; Vilerts 2018; Rattso and Stokke 2019; Michael and Christofides 2020) examine wage differences in the public and private sectors of the economy. Some studies show that the average hourly wages in the public sector are higher than those in the private sector (Mahuteau et al. 2017), and wage gaps by gender and education are smaller in the public sector than in private companies (Morikawa 2016). Some research on wages in the public sector reveals that wage increases for public officials can reduce corruption (Chen and Liu 2018; Cornell and Sundell 2020; Demirgüç-Kunt et al. 2021).

Some research on social partnership in the public sector shows changes in the characteristics of the social partners, objectives, and strategies; social dialogue structures and processes (Ramos Martin 2018); growing challenges and shrinking opportunities for unions (Kearney and Mareschal 2017); and the insufficient process of social dialogue (Paunović et al. 2016).

It should be noted that the specifics of industrial relations and social partnership in the public sector, including wage regulation, remain inadequately studied.

## Methodology

To assess the DSPRLR, a set of indicators with standards has been proposed (Table 1).

An expert method was used to verify the reliability of the indicators. In February 2021, an expert survey was conducted among scientists and specialists in industrial relations. Table 2 contains the main characteristics of the 13 experts that participated in the survey, which was conducted in the form of a questionnaire. Experts had to establish the significance of indicators on a scale from 0 to 7.3 scores were required for the indicators to remain in the list. None of indicators was eliminated due to the survey.

Table 1. The indicators of the DSPRLR

Indicator	Standard
1. Existence of the sectoral agreement	yes
2. Timeliness of concluding a sectoral agreement	yes
3. Identification of officials responsible for the implementation of the provisions of the sectoral agreement	yes
4. Settlement of labour remuneration issues during collective bargaining under the legislation, %	→ max (100)
5. Number of social partners' obligations on labour remuneration	→ max
6. The ratio of the number of social partners' obligations on labour remuneration under the current sectoral agreement compared to the number of obligations under the previous ones, %	→ max (≥100)
7. The ratio of the number of provisions of the sectoral agreement on labour remuneration, which contain specific obligations, to the total number of obligations on labour remuneration, %	→ max (100)
8. The ratio of the basic wage of the worker of the 1st category and the minimum wage provided by law, %	→ max (≥110)
9. The ratio of the 6-category tariff scale for workers	[2, 3]
10. The ratio of salaries of top managers and technical staff following the scheme of salaries	[4, 12]
11. The ratio between the salaries of professionals, specialists, and technical staff of two neighbouring categories, %	[10, 30]
12. The use of analytical methods for evaluating positions and jobs during the development of tariff conditions	yes
13. The use of flexible remuneration models	yes
14. Compliance of the list, amount, and procedure for payment of additional rewards and increases to legal norms and norms of the general agreement	yes
15. Existence of provisions on the introduction of personnel participation systems in the distribution of profits	yes
16. Existence of provisions for the introduction of social packages	yes
17. Existence of provisions for the introduction of social insurance programmes	yes
18. Existence of provisions on gender equality in labour remuneration	yes

Source: own elaboration.

A method for assessing the unit and complex indices of the DSPRLR at the sectoral level has been developed.

Unit indices ( $I_i$ ) for indicators for which the established standards are either met ("yes") or not are determined in the following order:

- If the actual value of an indicator corresponds to the standard, the unit index ( $I_i$ ) is equal to 1;
- If the actual value of an indicator does not meet the standard, the unit index ( $I_i$ ) is equal to 0.

For the rest of the indicators, the unit indices ( $I_i$ ) are determined based on the standardisation procedure according to the formula:

$$I_i = \frac{[X_{actual} - X_{min}]}{[X_{max} - X_{min}]}, \quad (1)$$

where  $X_{actual}$  is the actual value of the indicator achieved in a particular sector of the economy;  $X_{min}$  is the lowest value for the indicator among the studied sectors of the economy; and  $X_{max}$  is the highest value for the indicator among the studied sectors of the economy.

The complex index of the DSPRLR at the sectoral level ( $K$ ) is determined by the formula:

$$K = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n I_i}{n}, \quad (2)$$

where  $n$  is the number of indicators.

The value of the complex indicator can be in the range of 0 to 1. The ranges of the assessments are:

$$\text{If } K \in \left\{ \begin{array}{l} [0.8; 1] \\ [0.6; 0.8] \\ [0.4; 0.6] \\ [0.2; 0.4] \\ [0; 0.2] \end{array} \right\}, K \in \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{high level} \\ \text{higher than average level} \\ \text{average level} \\ \text{lower than average level} \\ \text{low level} \end{array} \right\} \quad (3)$$

Table 2. Characteristics of experts

Characteristic	Number of experts
<i>Profession</i>	
• Teacher	8
• Scientist	3
• Specialist	2
<i>Total</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Academic status</i>	
• Professor	3
• Associate Professor	6
• None	4
<i>Total</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Degree</i>	
• Doctor of sciences	5
• PhD	6
• None	2
<i>Total</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Work experience</i>	
• 10 to 20 years	6
• More than 20 years	7
<i>Total</i>	<i>13</i>

Source: Own elaboration.

A comparative analysis of the DSPRLR was carried out on the following services and public administration bodies: the State Audit Service of Ukraine, the State Treasury Service of Ukraine, the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine, the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, the Police of Ukraine, and the Pension Fund of Ukraine.

The criteria for forming the sample of services and bodies were the availability of concluded sectoral agreements and the representation of services and public administration bodies belonging to different classes under the Classification of Economic Activities CEA-2010. The State Audit Service of Ukraine, the State Treasury Service of Ukraine, the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, and the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine belong to Class 84.11, "State Administration of General Nature". The Armed Forces of Ukraine belong to Class 84.22, "Activities in the Field of Defence", and the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine and the Police of Ukraine belong to Class 84.24, "Activities in the Field of Public Order and Security". Finally, the Pension Fund of Ukraine belongs to Class 84.30, "Activities in the Field of Compulsory Social Insurance".

### Analysis of the nature of collective agreements in the public sector

The core indicator of assessing the DSPRLR is the *existence of a sectoral agreement*. As previously noted, one of the criteria for forming the study sample was the presence of concluded sectoral agreements. According to this criterion, all surveyed services and bodies meet the established standard, as they have the following sectoral agreements:

- Sectoral agreement of the State Audit Service of Ukraine for 2017–2021;
- Sectoral agreement of the State Treasury Service of Ukraine for 2016–2020;
- Sectoral agreement of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine for 2020–2022;
- Sectoral agreement of the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine for 2018–2020;
- Sectoral agreement of the Armed Forces of Ukraine for 2019–2023;
- Sectoral agreement of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine for 2018–2020;
- Sectoral agreement of the Police of Ukraine for 2019–2021;
- Sectoral agreement of the Pension Fund of Ukraine for 2016–2020.

The analysis of the sectoral agreements showed that some are regulations (the sectoral agreements of the Armed Forces and the Pension Fund of Ukraine) and some are acts of social partnership (the sectoral agreements of the State Audit Service, the State Treasury Service, and the State Statistics Service of Ukraine).

The recognition of the sectoral agreements as regulations and acts of social partnership can be considered a positive practice in terms of determining the legal nature of these agreements. At the same time, the norms and provisions of sectoral agreements do not apply to organisations and institutions that did not participate in the negotiation process and signing of agreements, per Article 9 of the Law of Ukraine “On Collective Bargaining and Agreements” (Parliament of Ukraine 1993). Thus, despite the social partners’ recognition of sectoral agreements as regulations and acts of social partnership, they cannot be considered as such, as their rules and regulations are not binding on all organisations belonging to a particular sector.

The next indicator for assessing the DSPRLR is *the timeliness of concluding a sectoral agreement*. Among the surveyed services and public administration bodies, only four (50%) have sectoral agreements that have not yet expired at the time of research. This may indicate difficulties in reaching joint agreements between the social partners on some issues, such as remuneration.

It is common practice to extend collective agreements that have already expired, although some provisions are outdated and do not correspond to current socioeconomic realities, especially in a situation with military and quarantine restrictions and the necessity of providing occupational safety. This practice thus negatively characterises collective bargaining and does not contribute to the development of social partnership and dialogue.

The next indicator for assessing the DSPRLR is *the identification of officials responsible for the implementation of the provisions of the sectoral agreement*. This indicator is important because the absence of responsible persons leads to non-compliance with the norms of the sectoral agreement. As a result, even the best obligations lose their effectiveness, which reduces partners’ confidence in social partnership as a tool for regulating industrial relations.

Only the sectoral agreement of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine defines the persons responsible for implementing the provisions of the sectoral agreement. The sectoral agreements of the Armed Forces and the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine contain a rule according to which the partners independently determine the persons responsible for implementing the provisions. The rest of the agreements do not specify the responsible persons and contain only the general statement that the partners are liable for their obligations. This practice negatively characterises the collective bargaining of labour remuneration.

### **Analysis of the settlement of labour remuneration issues during collective bargaining in the public sector**

The next indicator for assessing the DSPRLR is the settlement of labour remuneration issues during collective bargaining under the legislation. The assessment of the sectoral agreements’ regulation of remuneration norms, as required by the law, is given in Table 3.

Table 3. The assessment of sectoral agreements' regulation of remuneration norms as required by the law

Remuneration norms that must be regulated by a sectoral agreement under the Law of Ukraine "On Collective Bargaining and Agreements"	Assessment (yes, no, partially)							
	Sectoral agreement of the State Audit Service of Ukraine for 2017–2021	Sectoral agreement of the State Treasury Service of Ukraine for 2016–2020	Sectoral agreement of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine for 2020–2022	Sectoral agreement of the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine for 2018–2020	Sectoral agreement of the Armed Forces of Ukraine for 2019–2023	Sectoral agreement of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine for 2018–2020	Sectoral agreement of the Police of Ukraine for 2019–2021	Sectoral agreement of the Pension Fund of Ukraine for 2016–2020
1. Minimum wage guarantees by the qualification based on a unified wages scale	–	–	–	–	–	+	–	–
2. Minimum amounts of additional payments and increases, considering the specific work conditions of professional groups and categories of employees	–	–	+	+	+	+	+	–
3. Minimum social guarantees, compensations, benefits	±	±	±	+	+	±	±	±
4. Utilities and amenities, medical, cultural services	±	±	±	+	+	+	±	±
5. Rehabilitation and recreation	±	±	±	+	+	+	±	±
6. Conditions for the growth of wage funds	–	–	–	±	+	±	+	–
7. Inter-qualification (inter-job) ratios in labour remuneration	–	–	–	+	+	+	+	–
8. Ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men	–	+	+	+	–	–	+	–
Percentage of norms regulated by the sectoral agreement, %	0	12.5	25	75	75	62.5	50	0

Note: "±" means that only part of remuneration norms is regulated by sectoral agreement

Source: Own elaboration.

According to the data in Table 3, no sectoral agreement in the public sector regulates all issues of labour remuneration. The most progressive agreements from this point of view are those of the State Fiscal Service, the Armed Forces, and the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine. The least effective are the agreements of the State Audit Service, the State Treasury Service, and the Pension Fund of Ukraine.

The lack of specific obligations of the social partners to increase wages and labour remuneration funds negatively characterises collective bargaining. Most sectoral agreements contain a general statement that the partners commit to promoting wage increases and labour remuneration growth but do not specify concrete figures.

Duplicating legislative norms and norms of the general agreement by sectoral agreements cannot be considered positive. Organisations and institutions must comply with the law, regardless of whether the norms are provided in the relevant sectoral agreement. The authors argue that sectoral agreements should include only those rules that expand the list of guarantees and incentives or offer higher payments to employees.

It is common practice to appeal to the regulation of relevant norms by the collective agreements of organisations and institutions. This indicates the decentralisation of collective bargaining from the sectoral to the organisational level.

Table 4. Comparison of the number of partners' obligations on labour remuneration in sectoral agreements in the public sector

Agreements	Number of joint obligations/partners agreed	Number of the public authority's obligations	Number of the trade union's obligations	Total number of obligations	The ratio of the number of obligations compared to the previous agreement, %
<b>1. Sectoral agreement of the State Audit Service of Ukraine</b>					
for 2013–2015	13	0	4	<b>17</b>	–
for 2017–2021	1	16	6	<b>23</b>	<b>135.3</b>
<b>2. Sectoral agreement of the State Treasury Service of Ukraine</b>					
for 2012–2015	15	0	4	<b>19</b>	–
for 2016–2020	18	6	6	<b>30</b>	<b>157.9</b>
<b>3. Sectoral agreement of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine</b>					
for 2015–2018	10	8	9	<b>27</b>	–
for 2020–2022	8	8	9	<b>25</b>	<b>92.6</b>
<b>4. Sectoral agreement of the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine</b>					
for 2017–2019	0	37	22	<b>59</b>	–
for 2018–2020	0	37	22	<b>59</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>5. Sectoral agreement of the Armed Forces of Ukraine</b>					
for 2016–2018	28	13	8	<b>49</b>	–
for 2019–2023	21	12	7	<b>40</b>	<b>81.6</b>
<b>6. Sectoral agreement of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine</b>					
for 2015–2017	5	24	8	<b>37</b>	–
for 2018–2020	3	26	8	<b>37</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>7. Sectoral agreement of the Police of Ukraine</b>					
for 2015–2018	0	28	2	<b>30</b>	–
for 2019–2021	0	32	2	<b>34</b>	<b>113.3</b>
<b>8. Sectoral agreement of the Pension Fund of Ukraine</b>					
not available	–	–	–	–	–
for 2016–2020	7	6	5	<b>18</b>	–

Source: Own elaboration.



Further essential indicators are the number of social partners' obligations on labour remuneration and the ratio of their obligations under the current sectoral agreement compared to the number under the previous ones. The data for the analysis of sectoral agreements on these indicators are given in Table 4.

According to Table 4, the sectoral agreements of the State Fiscal Service and the Armed Forces of Ukraine contain the highest number of social partners' obligations regarding labour remuneration.

The previous sectoral agreements of the State Audit Service and the State Treasury Service of Ukraine did not create obligations for public authorities and were limited only to joint obligations. However, the agreements concluded for the subsequent periods included obligations of the public authorities, which can be considered a positive trend.

When comparing the number of obligations contained in existing sectoral agreements with the obligations under previous agreements, positive dynamics can be seen in the social dialogues of the State Treasury Service, the State Audit Service, and the Police of Ukraine.

The comparative analysis of previous and more recent sectoral agreements showed that the rules of existing agreements mostly duplicate the provisions of previous ones. Most agreements, which are characterised by an increase in the number of obligations, have such an increase due to general provisions and recommendations to include relevant rules by the collective agreements of institutions and organisations.

The ratio of the number of provisions of the sectoral agreement on labour remuneration, which contain specific obligations, to the total number of obligations on labour remuneration for each agreement is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. The ratio of the number of provisions of the sectoral agreement on labour remuneration, which contain specific obligations, to the total number of obligations on labour remuneration

Agreements	Specific obligations		General obligations	
	number	% to the total number	number	% to the total number
1. Sectoral agreement of the State Audit Service of Ukraine for 2017–2021	11	47.8	12	52.2
2. Sectoral agreement of the State Treasury Service of Ukraine for 2016–2020	18	60.0	12	40.0
3. Sectoral agreement of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine for 2020–2022	20	80.0	5	20.0
4. Sectoral agreement of the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine for 2018–2020	50	84.7	9	15.3
5. Sectoral agreement of the Armed Forces of Ukraine for 2019–2023	40	100.0	0	0.0
6. Sectoral agreement of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine for 2018–2020	33	89.2	4	10.8
7. Sectoral agreement of the Police of Ukraine 2019–2021	29	85.3	5	14.7
8. Sectoral agreement of the Pension Fund of Ukraine for 2016–2020	11	61.1	7	38.9

Source: Own elaboration.

According to Table 5, the most successful agreement in regulating labour remuneration based on social partnership is in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, where 100% of the obligations of the social partners are specific.

Some of the provisions of sectoral agreements (except for the sectoral agreement of the Armed Forces of Ukraine) are declarative (non-specific) without naming specific mechanisms for implementing the obligations undertaken by the partners.

## Analysis of the tariff conditions of labour remuneration in the public sector

The next block of indicators for assessing the DSPRLR are indicators that characterise *the tariff conditions of labour remuneration*. These indicators can be used to assess the collective bargaining of only those areas of public structures whose sectoral agreements provide for tariff conditions of labour remuneration; these structures are the State Fiscal Service, the Armed Forces, the State Border Guard Service, and the Police of Ukraine. As tariff conditions are key in the regulation of labour remuneration, the non-regulation of these provisions by sectoral agreements negatively characterises collective bargaining.

Table 6 shows the results of assessing the tariff conditions of labour remuneration.

Table 6. The results of assessing the tariff conditions of labour remuneration

Agreements	Ratio of				
	the basic wage of the worker of the 1st category and the minimum wage provided by law, %	6-category tariff scale for workers	salaries of top managers and technical staff following the scheme of salaries	the salary scale for managers and specialists, %	between the salaries of professionals, specialists, and technical staff of two neighbouring categories, %
Sectoral agreement of the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine for 2018–2020	317	1.375	1.5	[4; 10]	<10
Sectoral agreement of the Armed Forces of Ukraine for 2019–2023	120	2.0	2.3	[5; 20]	[7; 13]
Sectoral agreement of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine for 2018–2020	110	1.45	4.51 (unified wages scale)	[7; 9]	[2; 9] (unified wages scale)
Sectoral agreement of the Police of Ukraine 2019–2021	185	1.12	1.84	[2; 3]	<10

Source: Own elaboration.

Important indicators for assessing the tariff conditions of labour remuneration are indicators that characterise wage differentiation. The evaluation showed that the tariff conditions do not meet the established standards; they do not provide an objective differentiation of wages depending on the work complexity, responsibilities, and qualifications of employees. However, the one exception is the range of the tariff scale in the sectoral agreement of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

The significant shortcomings of tariff conditions of labour remuneration also include the lack of analytical methods for evaluating positions and jobs and flexible remuneration models. Although some sectoral agreements (the agreements of the State Fiscal Service and the Police of Ukraine) provide for a range of tariff rates and salaries, such practices cannot be called successful, as they have various shortcomings, including:

- Very narrow ranges that make it impossible to individualize employees' wages;
- Lack of overlap in the established ranges, which does not encourage employees who work for a long time in the organization and have significant achievements but belong to lower categories and ranks;
- Lack of clear criteria for determining the individual wages of employees within the established ranges.

## Assessing the practice of providing rewards, guarantees, and benefits in the public sector

The next indicator for assessing the DSPRLR is *the compliance of the list, amount, and procedure for payment of additional rewards and increases to legal norms and norms of the general agreement*. Not all sectoral agreements contain a list of additional rewards and increases; this negatively characterizes collective bargaining.

The list of additional rewards and increases is regulated by the sectoral agreements of the State Statistics Service, the State Fiscal Service, the Armed Forces, the State Border Guard Service, and the Police of Ukraine.

Analysis of the lists and amounts of rewards and increases showed that they meet the requirements of labour legislation and the terms of the general agreement. However, only some of the additional rewards and increases include higher payments compared to the legislation and general agreement. The lack of expanding the list of additional rewards and increases cannot be considered a progressive practice of collective bargaining.

The results of assessing *the existence of provisions for the introduction of personnel participation systems in the distribution of profits, social packages, and social insurance programmes in the sectoral agreements* are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. The results of assessing the existence of provisions for the introduction of personnel participation systems in the distribution of profits, social packages, and social insurance programmes in the sectoral agreements

	Introduction of personnel participation systems in the distribution of profits	Introduction of social packages	Introduction of social insurance programmes
1. Sector agreement of the State Audit Service of Ukraine for 2017–2021	–	–	–
2. Sectoral agreement of the State Treasury Service of Ukraine for 2016–2020	–	–	–
3. Sectoral agreement of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine for 2020–2022	–	–	–
4. Sectoral agreement of the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine for 2018–2020	+	+	–
5. Sectoral agreement of the Armed Forces of Ukraine for 2019–2023	–	+	+
6. Sectoral agreement of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine for 2018–2020	–	+	+
7. Sectoral agreement of the Police of Ukraine 2019–2021	–	+	+
8. Sectoral agreement of the Pension Fund of Ukraine for 2016–2020	–	–	–

Source: Own elaboration.

Only the sectoral agreement of the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine for 2018–2020 provides for the relevant employer obligations to introduce personnel participation systems in the distribution of profits. Since the participation of employees in the distribution of profits is a progressive practice and an essential element of the democratisation of governance, the lack of such norms does not contribute to the development of social partnerships in the public sector.

No sectoral agreement provides for introducing social packages. However, some of them (the agreements of the State Fiscal Service, the Armed Forces, the State Border Guard Service, and the Police of Ukraine) contain obligations to provide employees with a wide range of social guarantees and benefits. This practice can be considered positive because it characterises the employer as socially responsible and positively affects employees' loyalty.

The sectoral agreement of the Police of Ukraine provides for the introduction of health insurance programmes, which can be considered a progressive practice. In addition, the agreements of the Armed Forces and the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine contain obligations to provide medical services to employees, which is also a positive practice.

An important indicator for assessing the DSPRLR is the existence of provisions on gender equality in labour remuneration in the sectoral agreement. The agreements of the State Treasury Service, the State Statistics Service, the State Fiscal Service, and the Police of Ukraine include the relevant obligations (Table 3), which is good practice regarding the creation of equal economic opportunities for men and women.

### Assessing the complex index of the DSPRLR in the public sector

Table 8 presents the initial information for calculating the complex index of the DSPRLR in the public sector.

Table 8. The initial information for the calculation of the complex index of the DSPRLR in the public sector

Indicator	Standard	$X_{max}$	$X_{min}$
1	yes	–	–
2	yes	–	–
3	yes	–	–
4	→ max (100)	75	0
5	→ max	59	18
6	→ max (≥100)	157.9	81.6
7	→ max (100)	100	47.8
8	→ max (≥110)	317	110
9	[2, 3]	2	1.12
10	[4, 12]	4.51	1.5
11	[10, 30]	2	20
12	yes	–	–
13	yes	–	–
14	yes	–	–
15	yes	–	–
16	yes	–	–
17	yes	–	–
18	yes	–	–

Source: Own elaboration.

The calculation of the complex index of the DSPRLR in public organisations is given in Table 9. The clustering of the studied public organizations in terms of the DSPRLR is illustrated in Fig. 1.

According to the complex index of the DSPRLR, the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine holds the best position among the studied public organisations. The worst level of social partnership development is found in the Pension Fund of Ukraine. The cluster with an average level includes the State Fiscal Service, the Police, the Armed Forces, and the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine. None of the studied public organisations showed above-average or high levels of the DSPRLR.

The results of the study of the DSPRLR in the public sector reflect the general practice of collective bargaining in Ukraine not only at the sectoral level but also at the national and regional levels. There is a tendency to decentralize the collective bargaining regulation from the national, sectoral, and regional levels to the organisational ones. This conclusion corresponds with a common trend in industrial relations in various countries (Amable 2016; Pallini 2016; Rodríguez *et al.* 2016; Ibsen & Keune 2018; Rocha 2018; Jonker-Hoffrén 2019; Zisimopoulos *et al.* 2019).

Table 9. The calculation of the complex index of the DSPRLR in public organisations

Indicator	Unit indices							
	State Audit Service of Ukraine	State Treasury Service of Ukraine	State Statistics Service of Ukraine	State Fiscal Service of Ukraine	Armed Forces of Ukraine	State Border Guard Service of Ukraine	Police of Ukraine	Pension Fund of Ukraine
1	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>
2	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000
3	0.0000	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
4	0.0000	0.1667	0.3333	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	0.8333	0.6667	0.0000
5	0.1220	0.2927	0.1707	<b>1.0000</b>	0.5366	0.4634	0.3902	0.0000
6	0.7038	<b>1.0000</b>	0.1442	0.2412	0.0000	0.2412	0.3893	0.0000
7	0.0000	0.2337	0.6169	0.7069	<b>1.0000</b>	0.7931	0.7184	0.2548
8	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0483	0.0000	0.3623	0.0000
9	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
10	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000	0.0000
11	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
12	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
13	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000
14	0.0000	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000
15	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
16	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000
17	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000
18	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000	0.0000	<b>1.0000</b>	0.0000
<b>Complex index</b>	<b>0.1570</b>	<b>0.2052</b>	<b>0.3481</b>	<b>0.5527</b>	<b>0.4769</b>	<b>0.4073</b>	<b>0.5293</b>	<b>0.0697</b>

Source: Own elaboration.

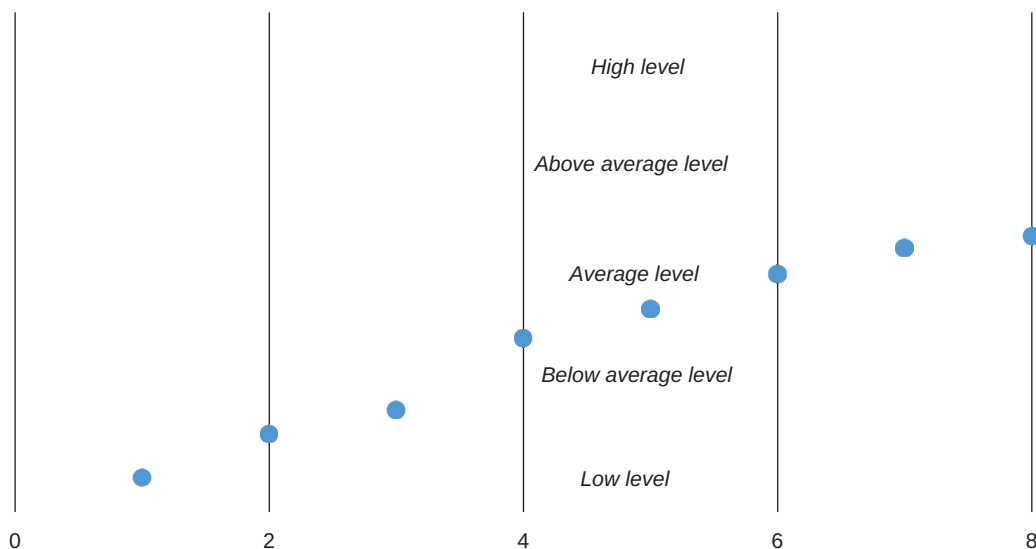


Figure 1. Clustering of the studied public organizations in terms of the complex index of the DSPRLR

Note: 1 – Pension Fund of Ukraine, 2 – State Audit Service of Ukraine, 3 – State Treasury Service of Ukraine, 4 – State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 5 – State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, 6 – Armed Forces of Ukraine, 7 – Police of Ukraine, 8 – State Fiscal Service of Ukraine.

Source: Own elaboration.

Under such conditions, the collective agreements at the organisational level should be strengthened. At the same time, the research results showed that such agreements end up playing a crucial role in regulating industrial relations and labour remuneration (Glassner & Keune 2012; Rodríguez *et al.* 2016; Addison *et al.* 2017; Hyman 2018; Anner *et al.* 2020).

In the private sector, the individualisation of industrial relations has shifted the emphasis from collective to individual bargaining. In the public sector of the economy, the weakening of the role of collective bargaining regulation at the sectoral level has various causes. The main cause is that the public sector of the economy has budget funding and the expenses for labour remuneration and the social security of employees depend significantly on the government's policy decisions. In this regard, the negotiation process of the social partners during the conclusion of collective agreements can be conducted only in the direction of the distribution of allocated budget funds, considering the legal norms and provisions of higher-level agreements.

## Discussion

The study revealed problems of collective bargaining in the public sector which hinder the development of social partnership, democratic principles, the social protection of employees, and decent wages. The study was based on assessing various indicators of social partnership. However, the survey did not consider civil servants' level of satisfaction with social dialogue and the policies of labour remuneration and social security. Thus, an important area of further research is the survey of civil servants to determine their satisfaction with social dialogue, labour remuneration, and social security policies. The survey results could be compared with social partnership assessments of various public organisations.

The indicators that characterise social partnership were accepted as holding equal significance in this study, although they may have different weights in reality. Determining the significance of indicators and taking them into account when calculating a complex index requires additional research.

An additional important indicator is the extent to which the social partners comply with the provisions of the sectoral agreement. In Ukraine, there is no practice of social partners publishing reports on the implementation of their obligations. It is therefore impossible to determine the level of agreement implementation. The fulfilment of some obligations should be examined separately in public organisations. However, it can be assumed that not all obligations of the social partners have been fulfilled.

For example, all agreements contain obligations of partners to prevent or repay wage arrears. However, the analysis of the data of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine showed that in the public sector, there are wage arrears. In general, payment in arrears negatively characterises social partnership, as it does not allow employees to meet their needs. Thus, due to the lack of complete information on the extent to which the social partners comply with the provisions of sectoral agreements, this indicator was not considered.

Finally, it is important to note that the research is based mainly on the content analysis of collective agreements. It is advisable to assess the effectiveness of the provisions of these agreements and their ability to influence the quality of citizens' working life, which requires additional quantitative and qualitative research, surveys, and focus groups.

## Conclusions

The analysis of the development of social partnership revealed significant shortcomings and negative trends, despite some positive characteristics. Among the positive characteristics inherent in some or most of the studied public organisations are the presence of a sectoral agreement, the recognition of sectoral agreements as an act of social partnership, the identification of centres of responsibility (officials responsible for implementing the provisions of the sectoral agreement), increasing obligations of the social partners, the existence of social guarantees and social insurance programmes, and commitments to ensuring gender equality in labour remuneration.

The negative characteristics of collective bargaining regulation include the following: a lack of obligations that must be settled by the law, a lack of specific instruments for implementing certain provisions, and the duplication of legislation without expanding and increasing the number of relevant benefits and social guarantees.

Labour remuneration policies are negatively characterised by the unresolved tariff conditions of remuneration by sectoral agreements. The tariff conditions provided by some sectoral agreements do not facilitate the objective differentiation of wages.

Furthermore, the limited practice of implementing employee participation in the distribution of profits, social packages, and social insurance programmes hinders the development of social partnerships and the implementation of effective social policy. The lack of social partners' commitment to ensuring gender equality in labour remuneration also prevents the creation of a democratic society and equal opportunities for all.

Moreover, the research showed that the negotiation process in the public sector of the economy can be conducted only in the direction of the distribution of allocated budget funds. To an extent, this explains the clustering of the studied public organisations in terms of the DSPRLR and indicates the illusory nature of collective agreements and the reduction of the potential of social partnership.

Finally, the study results revealed the best practices of collective bargaining in the public sector, which should be studied by policymakers and social partners and implemented during collective bargaining and the signing of sectoral agreements.

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