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Work and Life Quality
in New & Growing Jobs

The Sewage & Refuse Disposal Sector:
Waste Collection



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
European Research Area



SEVENTH FRAMEWORK
PROGRAMME

Funded under Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities

WALQING The Project

Funded by the EU's 7th Framework Programme, the **walqing** project (2009–2012) investigates selected sectors with potentially problematic working conditions, precarious employment and low wages. It explores the linkages between new and expanding jobs, the conditions of work and employment in these jobs and the more or less favourable outcomes for employees' quality of work and life. It does so by integrating several analytical levels and research paradigms:

- the analysis of **Europe-wide survey data** on the development of employment, the quality of work and life,
- the exploration of **sectoral and cross-sectoral stakeholder policies**,
- the **analysis of strategies of companies and public-sector work organisations** in selected industries,
- and the investigation of **individual jobholders' careers**, perspectives and aspirations.
- Specific attention is given to **vulnerable groups** on the labour market such as young people, older workers, migrants or women. ●

Imprint

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Graphic design: www.holzfeind.com

Printing: Riegelnik Ges.m.b.H, Vienna

Sources (where not indicated otherwise)

Kirov, Vassil (2011): How many does it take to tango? Stakeholders' strategies to improve quality of work in Europe. Deliverable 5.7, Synthesis report on sector specifics in stakeholder policies and quality of work and life for WP 5 of the walqing project, SSH-CT-2009-244597. Available for download on: www.walqing.eu.

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The walqing research is funded by the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme (SSH-CT-2009-244597). However, this report only reflects the authors' views. The European Union is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

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The walqing research in waste collection

In the Sewage & Refuse Disposal sector, often referred to as the waste sector, there are different types of jobs such as waste collection, street sweeping, waste sorting, dumping, and recycling. All of these are still also done within the public sector. Research in the **walqing** project focused on **waste collection** and on the variations between **public** institutions, **private** companies, and **public-private partnerships** in the sector. In some countries, data on other activities in the sector, such as street sweeping, were also included. Research in the waste sector in the **walqing** project was carried out in Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, and Italy. For each country, stakeholder interviews with relevant social partners and other sector experts and actors were carried out. The findings of this work package on stakeholder policies are collected in the **walqing** social partnership series available on the website, www.walqing.eu.

In addition, each country involved in the waste sector research carried out **2–3 organisational case studies**, consisting of interviews with management, works councillors and workers, and a total of **10–20 employee interviews** per country and sector. In total the material from these work packages consists of **9 national organisational case-study reports** and **4 national reports on employees' individual perspectives, agency and vulnerability**.

The organisations in which case studies were conducted are listed in the table below (please note that all organisation names are pseudonyms). ●

Overview of case studies in the waste sector

AUSTRIA	HILLTOWN, the waste disposal unit of a municipality WASTESOLUTIONS, a private-sector waste collection and recycling business
BULGARIA	CITYCLEAN, a municipal company operating in waste collection INTERWASTE, the subsidiary of a multinational company offering different activities in waste management
DENMARK	CGC, a family-owned, medium-sized regional waste management firm FGC, a regional waste management firm owned by a transnational corporation
ITALY	ARCASA, a municipal company operating in waste collection in the South of Italy APORRIMATA, a municipal company operating in waste collection in the North-West of Italy GREENSMELL, a municipal company operating in waste collection in the North of Italy

The sector

Waste management is partly a service in the general interest such as postal services, water supply, public transport or telecommunications – but it has its distinct features. Waste is by definition situated at the end of most value chains; it involves the handling of goods that are no longer wanted by their owners and that are to be thrown ‘away’. Urbanisation, industrialisation and modern consumption patterns have all required technical and social innovation, collective action and regulation to build infrastructures that can handle waste and avoid health and hygiene risks. 20th-century consumerism finally brought landfilling to its limits and made it clear that there really is no ‘throwing away’ on a finite planet.

For this reason, waste management has been **a thoroughly regulated sector** from its inception. First large cities

and then states set the framework, established waste collection services and obliged producers of waste to deliver their refuse and pay for these services. National and European environmental policies, the technological possibilities of recycling and re-use, and rising commodity prices have contributed to the establishment of markets for secondary materials in the sector. During the last decades attention in Europe shifted **from waste collection to disposal**, and later to **recycling**. The Directive 2008/98/EG mostly aims to implement a hierarchy of waste management preferences (with prevention of waste ranging highest, followed by recycling through secondary materials markets, then incineration and landfilling). ●

“In the 1980s, the picture was, here’s the bin, that gets emptied into a truck, then brought to the waste site, tipped out, that’s it, that’s how it started. And nowadays, waste management is about management. You divide up these material flows and consider at the collection point what gets collected separately and so on, and then these flows go through particular treatment routines.”

Austrian sector expert

Sector development

In most European countries the sector has **expanded** during the last years. Employment has increased considerably in spite of the economic crisis and future trends are also estimated to be positive. There are forecasts of about **50,000 new jobs in waste management** and about **500,000 new jobs in recycling**.¹ However, exact figures are hard to obtain because waste management extends across different sectors in employment statistics, from municipalities to companies that have their central activities and roots in different sectors (transport, construction, etc.). Both **environmental regulations and technological change** impact on the incidence and growth of many job types in the sector.

Nevertheless, **variation in the sheer amount of waste and of waste management standards in Europe** is considerable and roughly in line with each country's wealth.

Public services, markets and multinationals

All the countries investigated have experienced an **increase in privatisation and outsourcing**. Patterns of liberalisation vary widely: from downright

outsourcing to a wide range of public-private partnerships (PPP) and divisions of labour, in which the public sector as a central client still plays a weighty part. The liberalisation and outsourcing tendency has increased concentration and the possibility for multinationals to enter the market.

When landfilling was the central mode of waste treatment, market access was easy and open to local logistics companies and landfill operators, whereas recycling and incineration now require higher investments. **The increasing demands for efficiency**, the relatively **short service contract periods** with municipalities of three to four years, and the **costly new technology investments** to meet changing environmental standards have made it progressively difficult for small private firms to remain competitive or enter the market.

Indeed, the sector is increasingly shaped by **large multinationals**, which contract municipal services of waste collection and waste treatment and develop new expertise in the handling of public-private partnerships. However, there are still plenty of **small and medium-sized businesses** in the sector. In Southern and Eastern Europe especially, boundaries to the **informal and illegal sector** are permeable, a permeability that may increase with the tendency to consider waste a traded, recycled commodity. Within the last decade, the largest companies in the sector have emerged in the large EU countries – France, Germany,

Spain and UK. In the smaller countries we also see active medium-sized multinationals, often subsidiaries of larger construction or logistics companies. ●

Quality of work

For most non-administrative jobs in the waste sector, the working environment and conditions are problematic. There are different types of jobs in the sector, e.g. waste collection, sweeping, waste sorting, disposal, recycling, etc. Waste collection and urban sanitation (street sweeping and washing) are mainly manual activities that often imply **high physical strain** with low mental challenges and **limited career perspectives**. The increasing importance of recycling acts in different ways – e.g. in Italy, the shift from common container to door-to-door collection increased workload and physical effort, whereas selective collection and delivery by consumers may decrease it elsewhere.² ●

Health and safety

Collectors, depending on the technology, move **heavy garbage bins** and have to work in **toxic climatic and environmental conditions**. In addition, they are

exposed to accidents when working in traffic. **Health risks**, specifically muscle or back problems, are thus prevalent, and workers with health problems or disabilities are vulnerable. New health risks emerge in sorting and recycling, where workers often face unpredictable or **hazardous materials** and may have to work in dusty and unhygienic environments.³

On the other hand, since the 1990s, social partners, regulators or contract holders (especially in the public sector) in some places have been able to implement **initiatives to improve working conditions** such as introducing better technologies, lowering workload or working hours, or increasing skills. ●

“Above all, the separated waste collection is bringing us back to working conditions similar to those in the fifties. [...] In Italy the work is completely manual, only performed by the physical effort of the waste collectors. And this is causing disasters: working unfitness and difficulties to keep on working.”

employee representative, Italy

1 Van den Berge, Jerry (2011): Waste services in a Green economy. Presentation at the walqing stakeholder seminar 'Greening the Economy: What impact on the quality of work?', Brussels, September 29, 2011, www.walqing.eu/index.php?id=62.

2 Hall, David (2010): Waste management in Europe: framework, trends and issues. PSIRU: Brussels, www.psiu.org/sites/default/files/2010-2-G-trends.doc; Beratungsgesellschaft für integrierte Problemlösungen (2012): Screening of waste management performance of EU member states. BIPRO: Munich, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/studies/pdf/Screening_report.pdf.

3 ILO (2012): Promoting safety and health in a greening economy. ILO: Geneva, http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---safework/documents/publication/wcms_175600.pdf.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE

Continuous investment into new technology improving health and safety

Matteo Ferraris, Laboratorio Revelli

Situation

Some companies in the North and North-West of Italy have made the strategic choice to invest more in research and development, also to reduce strain and effort for workers. For example, one company, APPORIMATA, has developed a mechanical device to collect refuse and dump it into the vehicles, a sort of spoon-shaped loading system that reduces workers' efforts during the collection operation. In the last decade, street cleaning has also been mechanised. The new global street cleaning service has replaced the old manual work. This type of mechanism was invented and patented by the company itself in order to avoid the problem of cars parked along the streets and to facilitate the job of the operators. The new vehicle is called sweepy-jet. With regard to efficiency, this mechanism has also improved the quality of work for this task since workers need less effort. Technological innovation thus contributes to reducing workload and the physical attrition of the environmental operators.

Generally, the main strategy is to provide the best possible service to the city at the lowest possible cost. Nevertheless, the company invests a lot in new technologies and in research and development, making it a central point of its corporate strategy. However, the impact of technology in terms of better quality of work appears to be limited to the collection phases, while in other tasks it seems to only improve efficiency.

Limitations

Technology and system innovation are likely to be typical of the companies that generate more profit. Indeed, the research and development area is an advantage for those who have money to invest in.

Link

www.walqing.eu/webresource

Working times and discretion

Municipal garbage collection in particular, has some distinctly positive aspects for low-skilled work: teamwork among collecting teams with relatively high dis-

cretion and favourable working time arrangements. These may entail formal or informal piece rates and the right to go home after completion of the assigned tour regardless of the time taken. However, this arrangement is less common in the private sector. ●

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE

Giving workers choice over shift work: Flexible work in the North of Italy

Matteo Ferraris, Laboratorio Revelli

Situation

In a company in the North of Italy, GREENSMELL, the service of waste collection is arranged in two main daily shifts of six hours. The morning shift begins at 6 a.m., the afternoon shift at 1.30 p.m.

Some functional flexibility is exploited in order to assign to workers the tasks that fit best. Workers have the chance to change tasks, shifts or districts according to their personal needs or preferences. They may have to accept task changes in order to obtain a change in their shift or in their working zone. Several people ask to work during night shifts, not only because the wage increases by around 33%, but also because it allows them to have the day available for domestic work or to dedicate time for study in the case of younger workers.

Prerequisites

All the refuse collection companies provide the environmental services for 365 days out of 365. By contract, the maximum amount of weekly working hours is 50 and the maximum amount of daily working hours is 10. The national collective agreement of the sector provides 36 weekly working hours distributed over 5 or 6 days. Some workers would prefer to work more hours on five days a week in order to have more time for family and private life.

Limitations

Not all the companies of the sector have chosen this policy of flexibility of work. Usually, the companies fix the shifts depending on the skills and necessary capacity rather than the needs of workers.

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Security and flexibility

When waste is collected and managed by **municipalities**, employment security traditionally has been well above that in the private sector and often after a certain period, jobs used to become tenured. This (and the strong union presence in the public sector) should set incentives for municipalities to invest in health and safety measures, skills and the general employability of their workers – but we do not observe a uniform

tendency within public-sector waste management since these efforts come under financial constraints.

When waste services are **outsourced or privatised**, changing contracts become a new source of employment insecurity if transfer of undertakings does not apply and service providers do not take over workers. Also, wage schemes honouring seniority and offering pay supplements and allowances for heavy, dirty or mobile work come under pressure. ●

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE

A 'seventh man' or a permanent temp pool: Regularising temporary workers in Danish waste collection teams

Ole H. Sørensen, Peter Hasle, Det Nationale Forskningscenter for Arbejdsmiljø (NRCWE)

Situation

In Danish waste companies, domestic waste in cities is typically collected by permanent teams of 2-3 employees servicing the same route. Managements therefore face the problem of how to maintain effective collection in cases of absence for sickness or vacation. Generally, companies use a pool of temporary workers that can be called in on a day-to-day basis. This group has some of the most precarious working conditions in the sector, with an unstable income, low social status and insecure working conditions.

In one company in the capital, CGC, three two-man teams and a 'temporary' worker form a seven-man team. The 7th man is permanently employed, i.e. a 'permanent temp'. The seven-man teams organise vacations within the team on a running schedule by themselves, with the 7th man replacing each of the six permanent workers when they are on vacation.

Another company, FGC, employs a small group of semi-permanent temporary workers at each garage. This group of workers normally meets at the garage at seven in the morning. If a worker calls in sick, a substitute can be sent to the team already at seven and holidays are also covered by the pool of

semi-permanent temps. If no substitutes are needed on a day, the semi-permanent workers perform tasks at the garage such as cleaning, getting spare parts, distributing bins to citizens, etc. Their pay is about 10-15% lower when they work at the garage.

This solution requires less self-organisation and has less permanence than the 'seventh man' arrangement. Still, it reduces the number of real temporary workers and it raises organisational efficiency.

Prerequisites

All work tasks should be performed by all members of the team, i.e. there should not be a division of work between drivers and collectors.

For the seventh-man arrangement, there should be permanent teams collecting waste on the same routes year round. Employees have to accept team members, i.e. there should be some leeway for self-organisation.

For the permanent temp pool, collective agreements should support a model where semi-permanent workers can be employed at the garage at lower wages. Also, it should be legally possible to adjust the number of the semi-permanent workers within a reasonable time horizon, otherwise employers might worry about creating a permanent workforce that is too large.

Limitations

Both systems limit management's flexibility in moving employees around, i.e. there may be a trade-off in terms of short-term operational costs versus long-term quality of service. For permanent temp pools, there is a limit to how much of a difference in pay between workers the unions will tolerate (in Denmark). Neither system can eliminate all temporary work because management will not bind themselves to unnecessary fixed costs.

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www.walqing.eu/webresource

Skills and training

Although training and qualification is a traditional win-win issue for social partners in sectors with otherwise difficult bargaining configurations, in the waste sector with its low-educated workforce commitment to training is more of an exception. Training is mostly limited to the compulsory health and safety instructions, but some companies support workers in achieving truck driving or forklift licences. This limits workers' labour market alternatives and exacerbates their vulnerability – although workers themselves also may expect little improvement from training, have negative educational experiences and thus have little interest. Initiatives aiming for improvement will need to take the respec-

tive context of education, skills and experience of the workforce into account and offer a clear perspective for the uses of these skills. They could range from issues of illiteracy to a range of skills in logistics, customer contact and knowledge of materials and recycling. ●

"When you are not qualified enough, there is nothing more to want, you could not find another job as this one."

employee representative, Italy

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE

Skilled waste workers in Denmark

Ole H. Sørensen, Peter Hasle, Det Nationale Forskningscenter for Arbejdsmiljø (NRCWE)

Situation

In the Danish waste sector, waste is typically collected by workers with no education except short courses such as truck and forklift driving licenses. The sector also has an above-average degree of dyslexic/illiterate workers. They face problems of employability in older age, and in addition, new societal developments, such as new technologies and greening, require workers to be more knowledgeable. The Danish social partners have therefore developed a curriculum to train skilled transportation and waste workers within the state system of vocational training.

The training consists of a number of short courses on various transport-related subjects, such as crane and lift operation, fork-lift driving, dangerous goods and first aid. It is scheduled to take three years, starting with 16.5 weeks of basic education at a technical school and followed by short courses of a total of 31 weeks. After graduating the training, skilled waste workers are paid about 0.60 EUR more per hour than unskilled workers. Indeed, in a former municipally-owned company which served the capital area, all workers were offered this type of training and most workers became skilled workers.

Prerequisites

- Institutions offering vocational training should exist.
- The social partners or the state should agree on defining a curriculum.
- Collective agreements and/or employers should recognize the training and pay higher salaries to honour the additional qualification.

Limitations

Training employees as skilled waste workers is a relatively large investment. Some employers therefore only offer the training if this is stipulated in a tender or if the municipality provides economic support. Furthermore, many waste collectors themselves are not very motivated for training and therefore do not put pressure on companies to get more education. The Danish union (3F) offers courses for dyslexic/illiterate workers and they claim that acquiring reading abilities sometimes motivates workers to get further education.

Link

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Workforce and vulnerability in waste collection

In most countries the workforce in waste collection is homogeneous, consisting of men belonging to the ethnic majority. An exception is Bulgaria, where waste collection is almost entirely carried out by members of the **Roma** community. In Italy, some migrants also work in waste collection, and some tasks are out-

sourced to social co-operatives that integrate vulnerable groups into the labour market. Waste collection is regarded as 'a male job', but some **women** work as street sweepers. **Employment security** is high even for those who are employed on fixed-term contracts. **Wages** and **social recognition** are low. Most jobs are full time, but finishing hours are early and some waste collectors are engaged in additional economic activities. ●

Workforce and vulnerable groups in the examined countries⁴

	AUSTRIA	DENMARK	BULGARIA	ITALY
MAIN SOCIAL GROUPS WORKING IN THE SECTOR	Native Austrian men (low skilled)	Native Danish men (low skilled)	Roma men as garbage collectors (low skilled) Roma women as sweepers (no primary education)	Native Italian men as garbage collectors (low skilled) Native Italian women as sweepers Some migrants
SPECIFICALLY VULNERABLE GROUPS	Older workers, Workers with health problems, Workers in private sector	Older workers, Workers with disabilities, Women (very few), Temporary workers	All garbage collectors and sweepers In particular: Female sweepers, commuting workers	Older workers, Single mothers, Migrants, Temporary workers

Source: Hohnen, P (2012): Capacities and vulnerabilities in precarious work. The perspective of employees in European low wage jobs. Synthesis report on employees' experience and work trajectories for work package 7 of the walqing project, SSH-CT-2009-244597.

Waste collectors in Austria, Denmark and Italy (in particular Northern Italy) are not particularly vulnerable in terms of income or employment security. Incomes are on

the low side but may be increased by some allowances or supplements, and waste workers do not consider themselves as poor. In all countries **older wor-**

kers and **workers with disabilities** appear vulnerable because of wear and tear. In cases of shorter tender periods that means they are less certain to keep their jobs if a new company wins the tender. **Temp workers** also have limited job security and a higher risk of unemployment. In Bulgaria, the **Roma waste workers** are particularly vulnerable due to limited alternative employment opportu-

nities, low education and poor living conditions. Some green innovations in waste management such as door-to-door collection in Italy and separate collection of recycling materials offer spaces for limiting exposure to hazardous materials and heavy lifting. Nevertheless, newly emerging jobs in, for example, waste sorting do not necessarily have favourable working conditions. ●

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE

Family employment practices: The example of CITYCLEAN

Darina Peycheva, ISKS-BAS

Situation

Bulgarian CITYCLEAN is a municipal enterprise, operating in waste collection and public sanitation. In the company, as well as all over Bulgaria, waste collection and street sweeping is done by members of the Roma minority who mostly have low skills and education and live in partly segregated city districts or villages. CITYCLEAN provides employment to entire Roma families/households on a long-term basis. In this context, even low-paid jobs offer entry into the formal sector and some access to social security. The serious problem of bank indebtedness puts these resources at risk again when banks have indebted workers' entire wages seized by court order. Aiming to help these workers, the management may hire another member of the family to provide families with an income.

Limitations

While family networks generally play an important part in recruiting workers for low-wage jobs and companies in Bulgaria contribute to social inclusion by offering comparatively secure formal employment to Roma, when job offers are rare this limits the chances of employment of others without family connections.

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⁴ It should be noted that 'vulnerability' is relative and differs between countries in line with social security provisions and the inclusiveness of welfare states. Within the four countries, Bulgarian (Roma) waste collectors are the most vulnerable whereas it could be discussed to what extent Danish and Austrian waste collectors as a group can be regarded as vulnerable.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE

Outsourcing municipal services to social cooperatives: Cheaper and inclusive

Matteo Ferreris, Laboratorio Revelli

Situation

Northern Italian GREENSMELL does not make great use of overtime work as it prefers to contract out services for which it does not have enough workers. Shortly before the research took place, the company had made an arrangement with a social cooperative where young people work to perform cleaning services in some cemeteries of the city. The company saves money, young people are given access to the labour market: it is a win-win situation. Social cooperatives are required to apply the same employment conditions as other ecological operators in order to protect equality in the access to work rights and avoid undercutting 'normal' companies.

Also North-West Italian APORRIMATA, in accordance with municipal law, tenders some of the environmental services to social cooperatives employing vulnerable groups. It goes beyond the legal requirements of externalising at least 5% of the services and has increased the percentage to 25%. These services are taken over by co-operatives employing members of vulnerable groups (such as people formerly addicted to drugs, ex-convicts). The main contracted-out activity is paper collection. Other cooperatives deal with flea markets, burial services, cleaning of riversides, toner collection and so on. They currently provide employment for more than 250 workers of external co-operatives. However, the company holds the responsibility to monitor quality of the service.

Prerequisites

Services are contracted out through public competitive tendering open at European level. However, when service financing is lower than 180,000 EUR, the law allows for directly assigning the contract without a competitive tender. Upstream, there is a strategic choice for the conception of social cooperation. If on the one hand, it is important to guarantee equality in the access to work rights, on the other hand employment of vulnerable groups implies additional follow-up costs that need to be subsidised.

Limitations

In some cases, outsourcing to a social cooperative could generate a sort of contractual dumping, in order to reduce taxation for the firms. In order to avoid

this, companies managing contracted-out services have to apply employment contracts with the same characteristics and guarantees as the national collective agreements applied in the environmental sector. Clearly, this constraint makes subcontracting less profitable as labour costs are the same but provides members of vulnerable groups with better employment conditions. Obviously, outsourcing work to social co-operatives limits overtime of company workers, and the additional income may be missed by them.

Link

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Social partners and social dialogue

In the countries examined, the composition of the social partners and the coverage and outcomes of collective bargaining differ widely. **Outside the public sector**, where unions have traditionally been strong, **coverage by collective agreements is patchy**.

In **Bulgaria** there is no employers' association in the waste sector, just an association for companies involved in recycling. The explanation provided by one of the interviewees is that the majority of the players in the sector are connected with different grey practices and interests and there are few companies that would like to commonly defend their interests. **Danish** social partners managed to develop networked collaboration, improved environmental standards and solutions to working environment problems (e.g., heavy lifting, chemical components, and accidents) in the 1990s and are currently struggling to

maintain these achievements in a changing environment of increased private sector activity and changing contractual relations between municipalities and service providers. In **Austria**, otherwise known for its comprehensive collective agreements, the establishment of a sector-specific agreement has so far been hindered mostly by the heterogeneity of both the employer organisations and the unions involved. In **Italy**, a national collective agreement protects workers from the negative effects of outsourcing because whenever a new company is awarded a contract, it has to ensure the continuity of employment, wages and other employment conditions.

Social dialogue at the **EU level** is not yet formalised in the waste sector. On the employers' side there are several organisations that represent different players in the field, for example, Municipal Waste Europe for the municipal enterprises, and FEAD for the private sector (this organisation stresses its business orientation but for the moment refuses to act as an employers' organisation).

On the trade union side, the main organisation is EPSU who since 2010 has made efforts to develop social dialogue and involve employers in order to establish formalised social dialogue.

With these diverse configurations of social partnership in Europe it becomes clear that the sector requires some efforts of developing forums and modes of social dialogue. These range from some institution-building in the less organised countries and segments of the sector to the extension of social dialogue beyond the traditional actors and issues. Social partners need to connect with environmental issues and forums, and negotiate a workable distribution of responsibility for quality of work among public sector clients, environmental service providers, social partners and citizens. Indeed, as end-customers who may also take over functions of self-service in waste sorting and recycling, their involvement and expectations can also contribute to improvements of job quality in the sector. ●

Waste management in Europe: Current trends and future challenges

The main developments shaping the quality of work in the waste sector concern the increasing importance of **environmental issues**, the continuing **privatisation** of municipal services and related problems of **public procurement**, and fast growing **Europeanisation** and **internationalisation**.

The recent **European legislation** on waste, the rising importance of **climate change**, and the need for a **transition to a 'recycling' society** all impact strongly on activities in the waste sector. So far, political and public attention to the environment does not automatically improve job quality. The impact of the **'greening' economy** depends on the emerging technologies, product designs and consumption patterns. However, with the prevalence and often controversial character of environmental issues, and also with the common perception that 'green' jobs are generally a good thing, **job quality and working conditions in the sector are not high on the agenda** of waste management policies, and the social impacts of different choices are rarely questioned.

As regards **privatisation and public-private partnership**, one of the issues for social partners is to try to address quality of work through **influencing the tendering process** and **extending the role of local governments** in the supervision of the private providers of waste management services. Here, solutions on both the local and the European level might aim to assure job stability, continuity and improvement of standards of health and safety, work intensity limitation and skill improvements, which also address existing educational limitations. To address these issues, European and national social partners outside the Nordic countries will need to lay the groundwork by establishing forums and frameworks of social dialogue and connecting this with the fields of environmental regulations. ●

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