

Patterns and trends in social partner involvement in times of crises

EMCO meeting hosted by the Swedish Presidency

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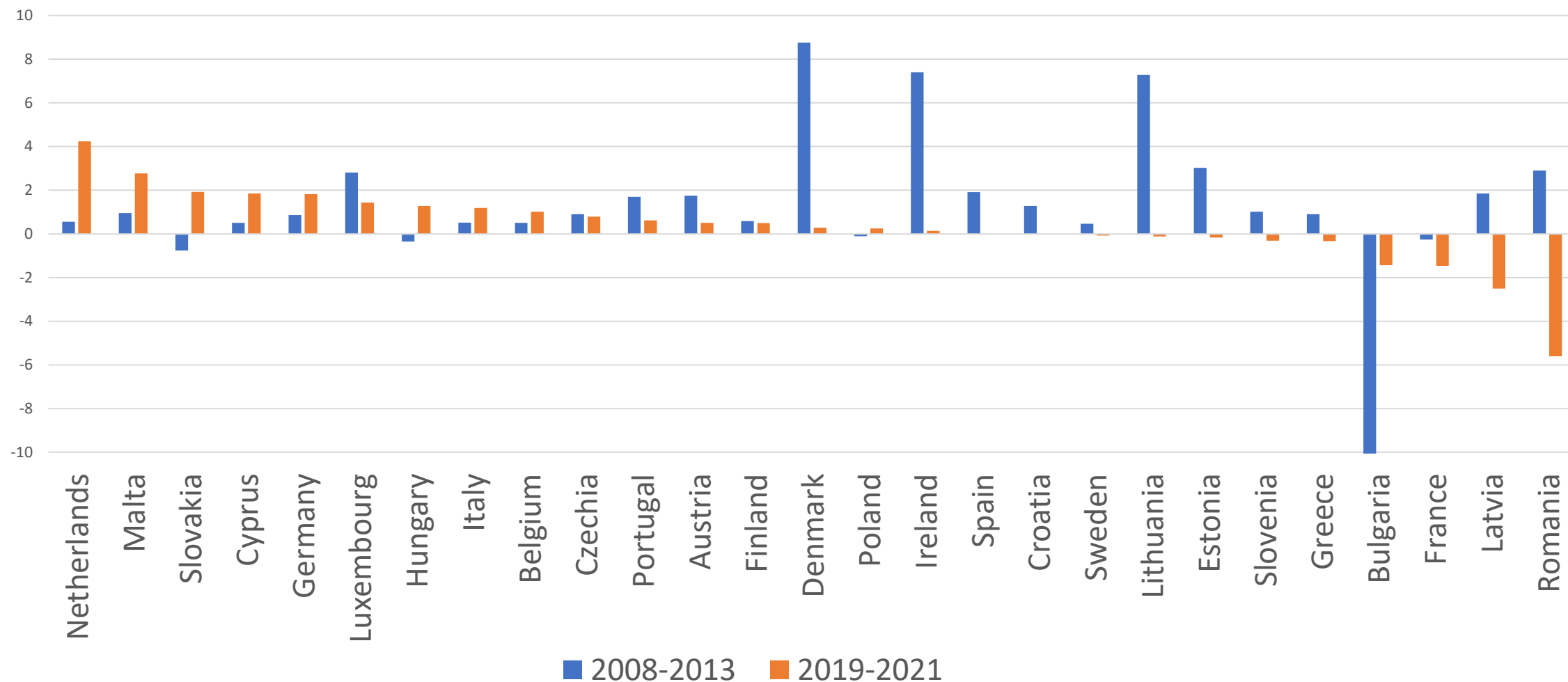
Recent evolution of social dialogue in the EU and responses to external shocks

1. The financial and economic crisis (2008-2012);
2. The recovery period (2013-2019);
3. The most recent crises (2020 – ongoing)
4. Final remarks

GDP growth and employment in the EU across crisis



Employment elasticity in both crisis





Impact of the financial crisis on social dialogue (2008–2012)

- **Early phase of the crisis (2008-2010):** Member States with robust industrial relations systems were in a better position to manage the economic and social impacts of the crisis
- **Second phase (2011–2012):** some countries were strongly hit by the implementation of strict fiscal consolidation rules to reduce macroeconomic imbalances, interfering in wage setting and subsequently eroding the quality of social dialogue.
- Overall, the **overall impact** of the financial crisis on social dialogue **took place alongside other longer-standing trends** such as decentralisation of collective bargaining, the decline in trade union membership.

Social dialogue during the recovery period (2013– 2019)

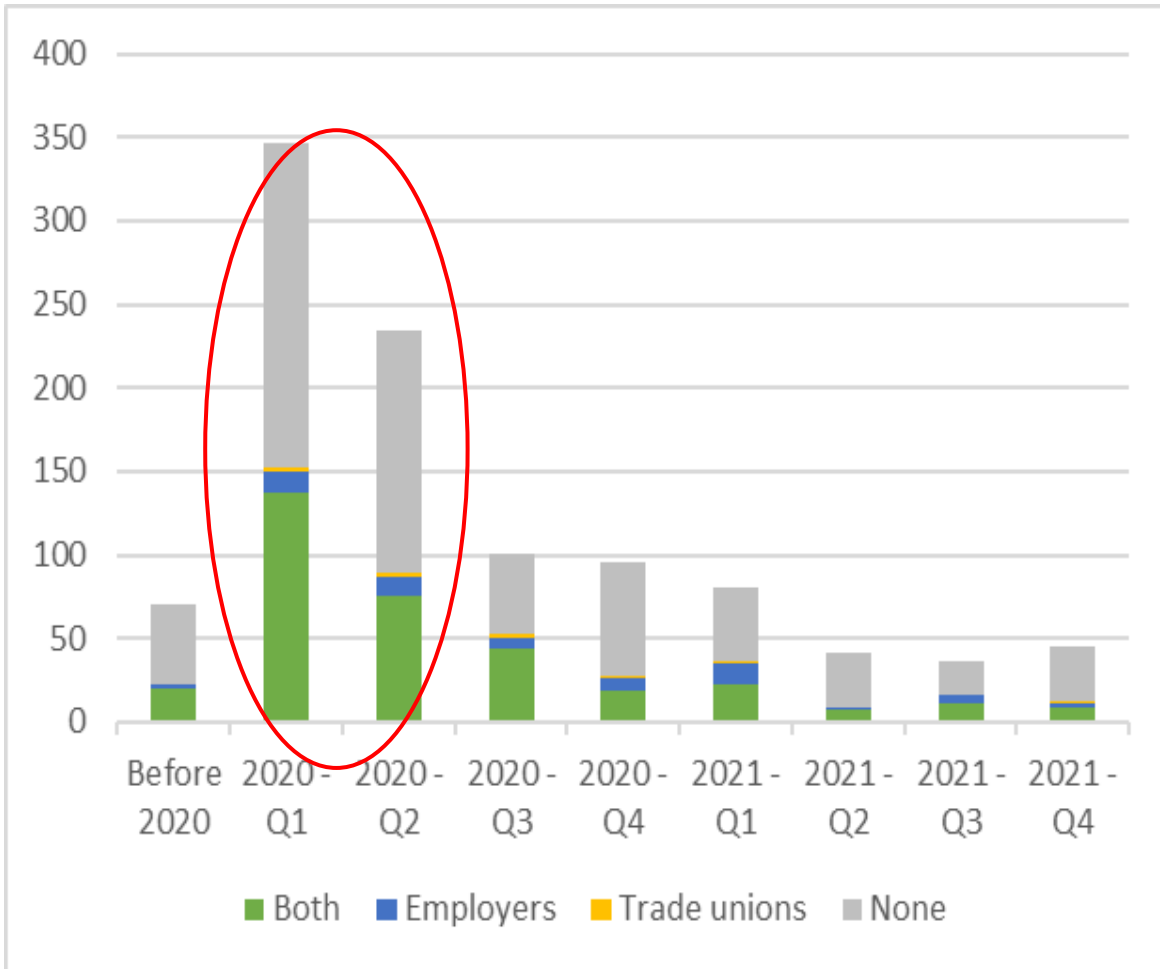
- Social dialogue resumed with consultation and tripartite exchanges
- Trade unions looked to restore pay and working conditions to pre-crisis levels, while employers' organisations proposed further wage moderation

2016 saw a huge leap in EU approach to social dialogue:

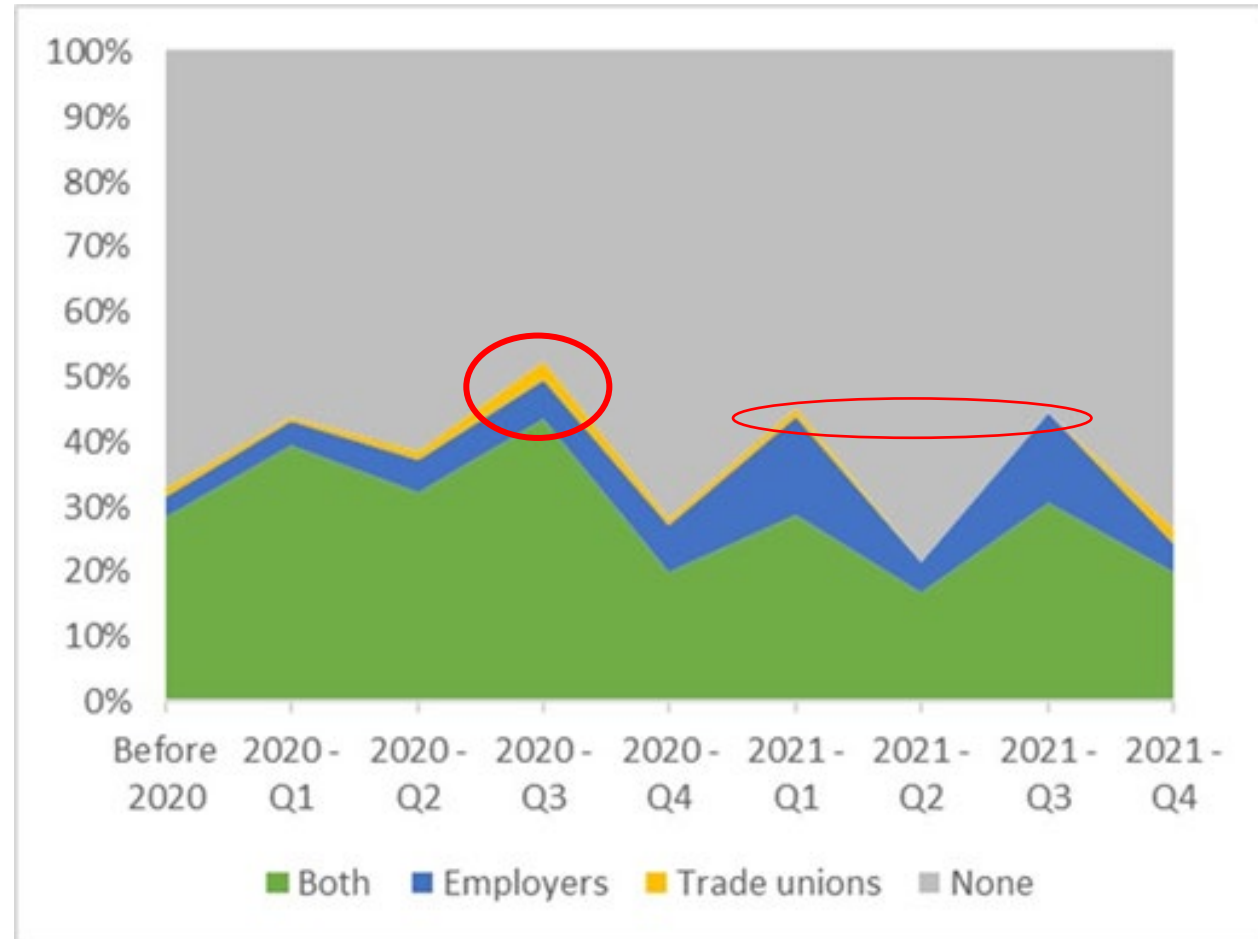
- 'New start for social dialogue' aimed at improving the involvement of both EU and national social partners in policymaking
- European Pillar of Social Rights
- Social partner involvement in the European Semester cycle was emphasised
- However, not fully effective in many Member States: some government unilateralism in policymaking persisted in specific countries, as recurrently reflected in the CSRs

Social dialogue in recent crisis

Number of measures and social partner involvement

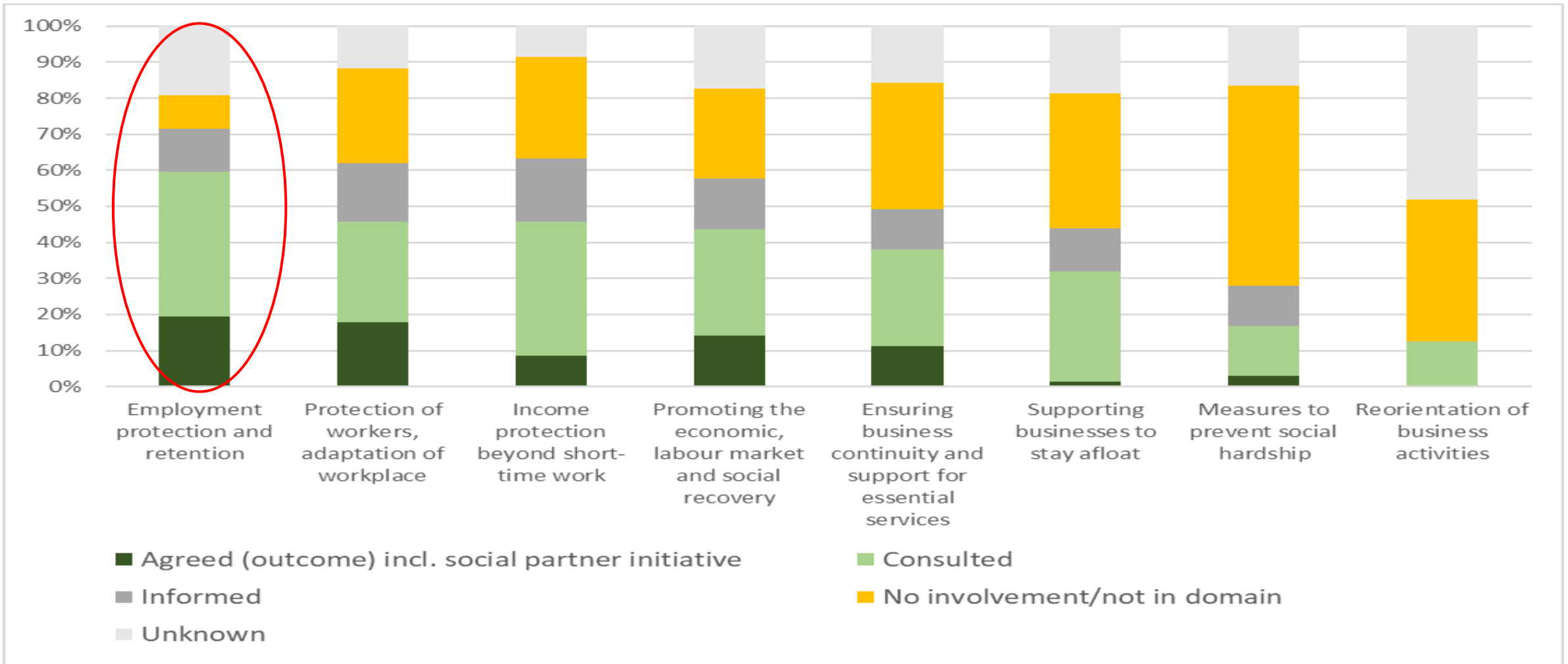


Percentage of measures with social partner involvement



National policy measures related to COVID-19

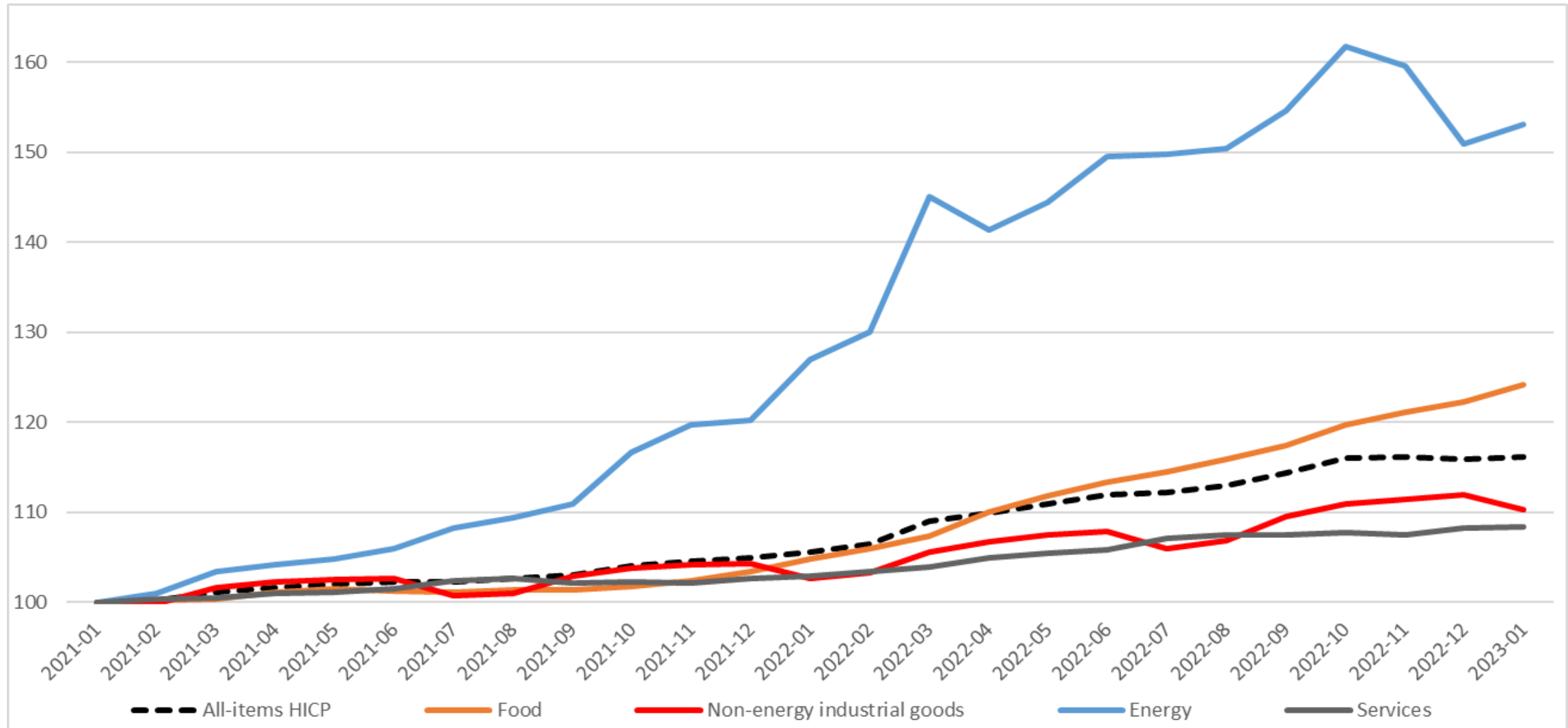
By type of measure, 2020–2021



Social dialogue following Russia's invasion of Ukraine

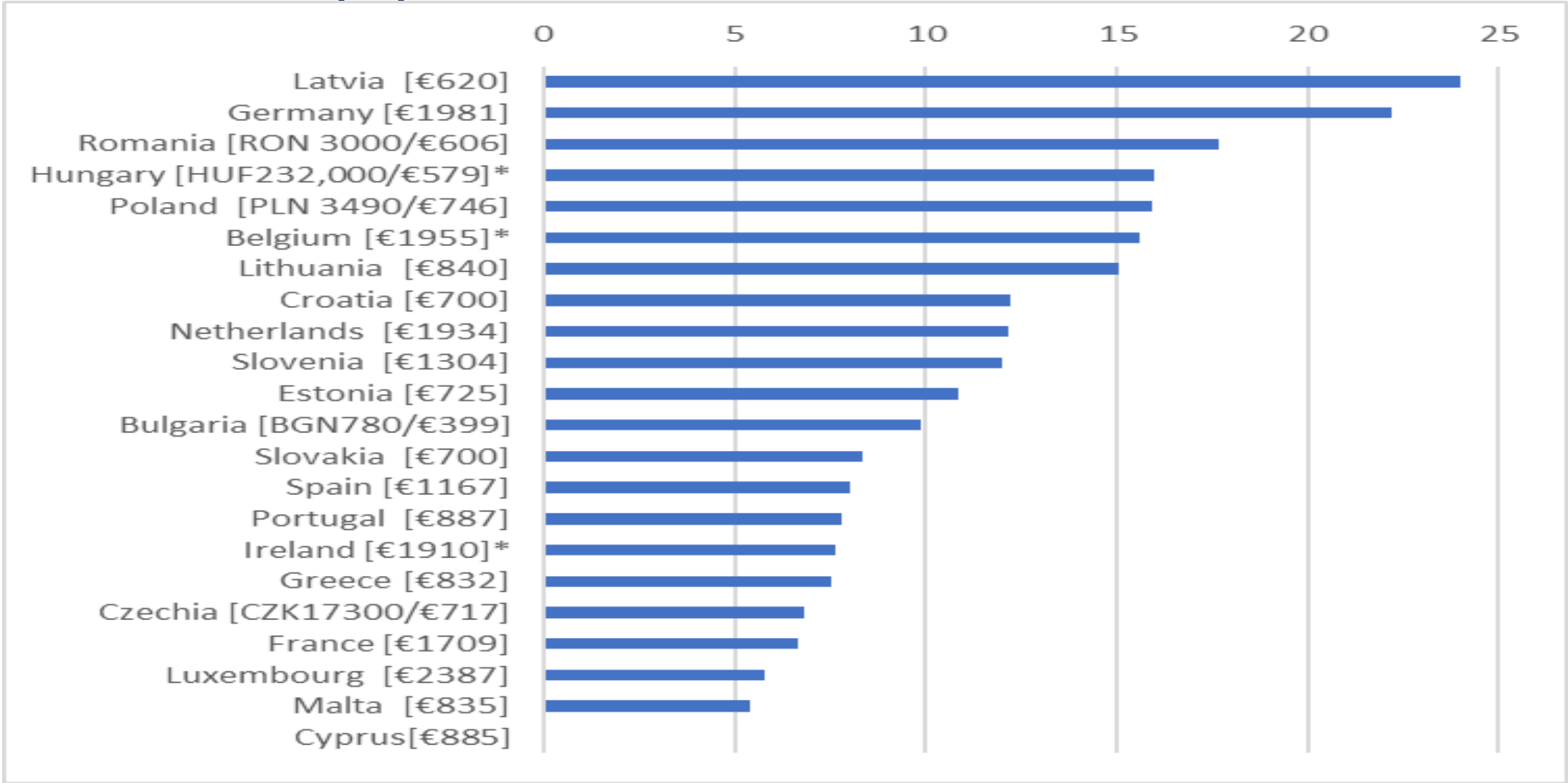
- Since some measures are not covered by social dialogue, results from Eurofound's database show that **social partners were less involved** in measures in the context of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 than in pandemic-related measures
- A much **higher degree of involvement** was recorded for those policies supporting the **integration of refugees** into the labour markets
- Mixed information regarding data gathered on the first responses to **mitigate the effect on citizens' purchasing power** (mainly temporary and one-off measures)

Social dialogue in a context of rising price levels



Unprecedented nominal rate hikes in minimum wage

Jan 22 - Jan 23 (%)



Final remarks

- National **social dialogue** has proved to be a **valuable instrument** to address external shocks
- **Greater contribution of sector-related social dialogue**: bipartite social dialogue and collective bargaining are at the core of tripartite social dialogue
- Having **tripartite bodies** - or equivalent structures in place - **is not sufficient condition** for well-functioning social dialogue
- Although differences in approaches and practices exist, involvement of social partners in the **National Reform Programmes** has improved over time
- Involvement in the **implementation of RRPs** still weak in some MS (early stages)
- **Reinforcement of the involvement of social partners and strengthening social dialogue** required in line with recent **European Commission's initiative**



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Thank you for your attention!

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