

## INTRODUCTION

Collective bargaining coverage is an important element of industrial relations systems as it determines the capacity of collective agreements to protect workers effectively. Moreover, it has also been identified as a key institution reducing earnings disparities, lowering the incidence of low pay and limiting labour market dualisation. Ensuring high coverage is accordingly key to guarantee an inclusive and socially sustainable recovery in the post-crisis period.

Several factors explain differences in coverage levels across countries: the structure of collective bargaining, the existence of extension mechanisms, membership of trade unions and employer organizations etc. Notwithstanding the relatively high levels of coverage that characterize most EU countries, a long-term trend consisting in the decline in coverage can be observed. Several factors may account for this trend: declining union membership, collective bargaining de-centralization, erosion of extension mechanisms. Some of the long-term structural trends have accelerated in the crisis years, including the de-centralization in collective bargaining and the implementation of reforms changing extension mechanisms.

Most studies of collective bargaining coverage have focused on its quantitative dimension, i.e., on how many workers are covered. Less attention has been paid to explaining coverage gaps, and even less to analyse other (more qualitative) problems related to coverage. Among the later, the extension of outsourcing practices has led to blurring the boundaries of both companies and sectors, hence posing important challenges to industrial relations actors and institutions when it comes to ensuring coverage.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The project focus on different realities / manifestations of outsourcing. These include workers in facility management companies, TAW, bogus self-employed workers and free lancers. All of them reflect the multi-faceted character of outsourcing, leading to the growth in groups of workers under very different legal status and very often left at the margins of existing collective arrangements at company or sector level.

The aim of the RECOVER project is to analyse collective bargaining coverage in outsourced services with a view to:

- a) identify coverage gaps / overlaps / conflicts related to outsourcing practices;
- b) study the role / capacity of existing institutions in dealing with them;
- c) analyse the strategies deployed by social partners in order to address these problems and d) provide actors with some policy guidance in order to ensure inclusive and effective coverage.

## **NATIONAL POLICY BRIEFS**

The national policy briefs contain a summary of findings related to the issue of collective bargaining coverage gaps and the position of workers in outsourced services. The objective of the national policy brief is accordingly to provide targeted groups with the general background and objectives of the RECOVER project, together with contextualisation for each of the national cases analysed and a brief discussion of key finding coming out from the case studies.

The national policy briefs are based on the final phase of the RECOVER project and are available on the RECOVER website:

<http://pagines.uab.cat/recoverproject/en/content/national-policy-briefs>

- [Policy brief - Spain](#)
- [Policy brief - France](#)
- [Policy brief - Italy](#)
- [Policy brief - Netherlands](#)
- [Policy brief - Poland](#)
- [Policy brief - UK](#)

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## PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Relaunching Collective Bargaining in Outsourced Services – RECOVER

PROJECT COORDINATOR

Dr. Oscar Molina

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona  
Sociological Research Centre on  
Everyday Life and Work – QUIT  
Campus UAB, C/ de la Fortuna  
08193 Bellaterra - Spain

E-mail: oscar.molina@uab.cat

## CONSORTIUM

- [Centre d'Estudis Sociològics sobre la Vida Quotidiana I el Treball \(QUIT\)](#)  
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona  
(Barcelona, ES)
- [Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Labour Studies \(AIAS\)](#)  
University of Amsterdam  
(Amsterdam, NL)
- [Institute of Public Affairs \(IPA\)](#)  
(Warsaw, PL)

- [Durham University Business School](#)  
Durham University (Durham, UK)
- [Università degli Studi di Teramo](#)  
(Teramo, IT)

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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## WEBSITE & SOCIAL NETWORKS

Webpage:

<http://pagines.uab.cat/recoverproject/en>