



Central European
Labour Studies
Institute






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*Are multinational companies good for
trade unions?*

MNCs' hostility towards trade unions in the Slovak automotive and retail sectors

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Selected cases - hostility towards trade unions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Est. in 2004; > 3.700 employees • TU affiliated to OZ KOVO, density 25-30% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIA-TU relations strongly impacted by the Korean ER (early years) – problematic bargaining mechanism, caused by lack of experiences on both sides; • „union free policy“ inapplicable for the local Slovak realities; • Hostility moved into the direction of dialogue with them (but, keep workers under control; union does not recognize it as a threat);
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Est. in 2003; > 4.500 employees • 2 TUs: OZ KOVO & MOV, density rate: 25% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive attitudes towards the union formation – PSA extended its agreement with IndustriAll to the Slovak production facility; but trying to shape the workforce structure by weakening TU’s position, causing problematic negotiations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Est. in 2004; 5.500 employees • TU est. in 2016, affiliated to OZ KOVO (unique example); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong reluctance from Lidl, focused on the disabling the TU leadership; following the company’s hostility policy from other countries (e.g., representatives’ paid release and union dues not allowed); • Pre-2019: stagnant membership; after 2019 – increased membership - new TU president + Facebook page (informative & recruitment character) + TU membership in OZ KOVO;

Main findings

- Hostility on the side of employers is present; individual activities are visible – cases showed situations when the unions were recognized, however also cases of problematic cooperation (e.g., obstacles setting – Stellantis & Kia;) or keeping of insufficient work task towards union representatives (e.g., Lidl management towards the trade union);
- Hostility = domestic practicalities + expectation of weak trade union density & cheaper labour force in CEE countries;
- Employers demonstrate the control over the agenda, but formulate the decisions according to the local standards and principles;
- TUs are focusing on own initiatives – membership in international unions is present, but limited activities.

Thank you for your attention