

Negotiating Our Way Up: Collective Bargaining in a Changing World of Work

Trade union density

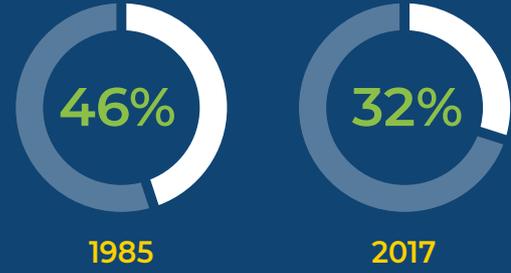
% of employees who are union members



Trade union density varies from 4.7% in Estonia to 91% in Iceland. On average, 16% of employees were members of trade unions in 2018, down from 33% in 1975.

Collective bargaining coverage

% of employees covered by a collective agreement



The share of workers covered by a collective agreement has shrunk to 32% in 2017 from 46% in 1985 (on average across OECD countries).

Non-standard workers

e.g. Temporary & dependent self-employed workers



Workers in non-standard jobs are 50% less likely to be unionised than standard workers.



Labour market performance and job quality



Wage inequality is highest in systems with no collective bargaining or where firms set wages independently.

Collective agreements can also help to promote a better work-life balance. However, if not well designed collective bargaining can harm productivity.

Collective bargaining & the future of work



Collective bargaining can help manage the adoption of new technology by granting new rights to workers, e.g. "right to disconnect".



Unions are diversifying their strategies to attract hard-to-reach non-standard workers.



New ways for representing workers' interests have developed in some OECD countries.

Policies can help



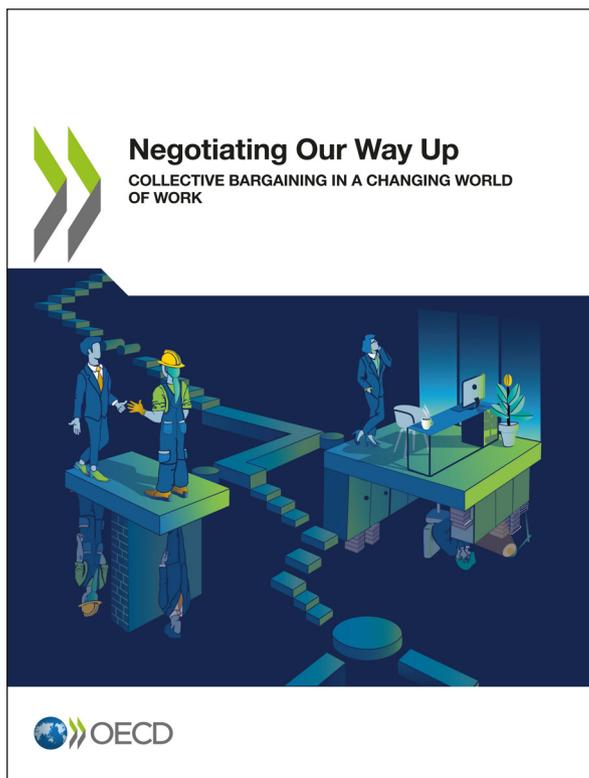
Balancing inclusiveness & flexibility in bargaining systems to achieve good outcomes for workers & companies.



Enforcing the correct classification of workers so they benefit from the protection and rights they are entitled to.

Adapting labour & competition regulations to extend collective bargaining rights to vulnerable self-employed workers.

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Collective bargaining and workers' voice are often discussed in the past rather than in the future tense, but can they play a role in the context of a rapidly changing world of work? This report provides a comprehensive assessment of the functioning of collective bargaining systems and workers' voice arrangements across OECD countries, and new insights on their effect on labour market performance today. The publication provides a detailed review of existing collective bargaining institutions and workers' voice arrangements. It analyses the role of these institutions for employment, wages, labour market inclusiveness, as well as non monetary aspects of job quality. The publication also discusses how collective bargaining can be mobilised to address emerging challenges in the labour market, and identifies the type of government intervention that may be required to do this. The report provides a resource for policy makers, trade unions and employers' organisations interested in understanding how collective bargaining and workers' voice can be used to complement public regulation in shaping ever changing labour markets.



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