

BLOCUL NATIONAL SINDICAL



**Romania in the
digital landscape
BNS presentation
1st steering group meeting –
project EFAD**

11-12 October 2022



Romania in the EU digital landscape

RO in the EU digital landscape



Since 2014 - European Commission monitors Member States' progress in the digital area and publishes annual **Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) reports**.

- ▶ The reports include country profiles - helping Member States identify priority areas for action, thematic chapters that provide EU-wide analysis in key digital policy areas.
- ▶ The **DESI** ranks Member States according to their *level of digitisation* and *analyses their relative progress over the last five years*, compared to their starting point.
- ▶ **Romania** - 27th out of 27 EU Member States (2022 edition of the Digital Economy and Society Index). RO's relative annual growth is lower than similar countries, i.e. it is not converging with the rest of the Member States.
- ▶ Romania is considerably below the EU average in terms of
 - **basic digital skills (28% compared to 54%)** and
 - **digital skills above basic level (9% compared to 26%)**

RO in the EU digital landscape



BUT - leading positions in terms of the **proportion of female ICT specialists in the workforce** (2nd place) and in terms of the **number of ICT graduates** (4th place).

- ▶ RO - performs poorly in terms of *digital inclusion*, ranking 27th.
- ▶ Almost all indicators - still well below the EU average - have either stagnated or even decreased over the last year.
- ▶ RO - share of SMEs with at least a basic level of digital intensity was 22% (EU average: 55%).
- ▶ Digital public services = challenge for RO. Availability of digital public services for citizens - assessed at a score of 44 compared (EU average is 75), and for businesses a score of 42 (EU average is 82).
- ▶ The only area where Romania is not at the bottom of the ranking is **connectivity**, ranking 15th out of 27 EU countries.

**BNS - partnership for the
implementation of the European
social partners' autonomous
framework agreement on
digitization**



- ▶ BNS translated and disseminated among its members the agreement reached at European level. *As far as we know the European Social Partners' Framework Agreement on Digitalisation has only been translated by some of the social partner organizations, BNS included.*
- ▶ BNS + one employers' organization + trade union and employers' organizations in Hungary and Slovakia - a European funded project:
- ▶ **"Renewed social dialogue for a new world of work. Job transition and digitalisation in industrial sectors in CEE countries - Romania, Hungary, Slovakia - WorkTransitionCEE".**
- ▶ in progress; ends in January 2023.

BNS actions



- **WorkTransitionCEE - new perspective to social dialogue, proposing innovative tools and methodologies such as job mapping, trend mapping and co-creation of solutions to increase the capacity of social partners to respond to the challenges posed by the workplace transition;**
- **intention to prepare for large-scale transformations**
- **aim to guide employers, employees and their representatives on how to address these issues in the future;**
- **challenges posed by automation, digitisation and artificial intelligence will be high on the public agenda in the coming years and the world of work should be prepared to approach these challenges.**

Challenges of the RO social partners in relation to the implementation of the autonomous European social partners' agreements



Given the economic, social and political context of last years –

- ▶ *we feel that not enough was done towards the implementation of the Autonomous European social partners' agreements.*
- ▶ *However, the pandemic affected and pushed everyone - it was possible for all social actors to understand the importance of cooperation in terms of digitization and regulations.*
- ▶ *BNS applied EU funded projects to improve the digital skills of its members.*
- ▶ *There are regulations regarding the facilitation of training for employees – enshrined in the Labour Code and in the Government Ordinance regarding vocational education for adults*



**BNS commitments and actions on
digitization in current activity**

BNS commitments and actions on digitization in current activity



- 2010-2012 BNS carried out a project that created a digital learning platform (**e-learning**), running digital courses for workers.
- Since 2016 - BNS developed a **portal with interactive functions** to communicate and provide services to member organisations, union members and workers
- organised and ran **digital literacy courses** for employees
- currently **developing a mobile phone application** for our union members – MyBNS (ready by the end of this year)
- working on updating and developing BNS's portal + **link to the app**
- **digital literacy and data protection courses** underway,
- projects (already approved) for **digital literacy courses** in near future

Legislation

Legislation



- There are provisions in the Labour Code on digitisation issues
- The European Regulation on the Protection of Personal Data has been transposed into national law
- Romania has a law on telework (before the pandemic)

There are various laws linked to workplace digitization to some extent:

- 1. Labour Code (law 53/2011), updated: provisions about the **electronic signature as an alternative to signing in person documents linked to the employment relationship.***
- 2. Protection of personal data (law 363/2018) - **prohibits the employers to monitor the activity of employees – only the access ways are allowed to be monitored under the provisions of this law.***
- 3. Law on telework (Law 81/2018), updated in 2020 and 2021, - concerns various **employment aspects** - BNS has been requesting from the Romanian Labour Inspectorate to work with us in order to develop a project to support and reinforce the control activity.*



- ***The right to disconnect has not been tackled yet by the authorities.***
- ***Practices differ from company to company***
- ***Union members informed us that it is difficult for an employee to just say 'no' if they are asked to be online and react to email or other tasks outside working hours.***
- ***Unions are now collecting cases and try to understand the scale of the phenomenon at national level in order to develop a strategy or propose regulations***



- ▶ RO has a Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitisation - which stated its intention to increase digital competences among the populations.

BUT

- ▶ We are NOT aware of concrete steps in this direction
- ▶ **Social partners have NOT been informed or consulted in any way by the ministry representatives.**
- ▶ Digital transformation is not often on the agenda of public debate but we are highlighting the necessity to look thoroughly into the impact of digitization, such as increasing telework, employees being replaced by digital solutions and equipment.
- ▶ Topic is not yet in the spotlight.

Collective labour contracts and internal regulations



- In financial institutions (banks, insurance companies) there are sometimes provisions in the collective labour agreements for continuous professional training of employees, BUT there are no special provisions for digitalisation courses.
- Internal regulations provide for staff training courses when improved versions of software or new software programs are implemented



Thank you for your attention!

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