

# Sharing responsibility for more growth and employment in Tunisia

## Cooperation between the social partners - promoting the Social Dialogue

### Challenge

Unemployment in Tunisia has remained at a high level of around 15 percent for years. The government is therefore under enormous pressure to create perspectives for work and employment. Protests due to unemployment repeatedly lead to unrest. A further deterioration of the socio-economic situation could affect the stability of the country. To date, there are no signs of a sustainable reduction in the unemployment rate, which suggests that the state's labour market policy is not sufficiently effective in solving the problem.

A central structure of the Tunisian Social Dialogue, established in 2018, which includes all negotiations, consultations and information exchange between government, employers and employees, is the "National Council for Social Dialogue" (CNDS).

The institutionalization of the Tunisian Social Dialogue through a consultative body is a major result of the social agreement concluded in 2013 between the government, the employers' and trade union federations. The CNDS makes an important contribution to Tunisia's socio-economic stabilisation and is therefore supported with appropriate measures on a long-term basis.

### Objective

**The social partners are increasingly making better use of the potential of Social Dialogue to promote employment. In particular, the capacity of the implementing partners to negotiate and design employment policies in a tripartite structure has been strengthened.**

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Partner	Ministry of Social Affairs
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### Approach

The project is being implemented in a multi-actor partnership with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and the German Chamber of Commerce Abroad (AHK Tunisia). The Tunisian Social Dialogue is supported in the areas of employability, transition to the formal sector and unemployment insurance. The implementing partners on the Tunisian side are the Social Ministry (political partner), the trade union federation UGTT and the employers' association UTICA. Representatives of the German social partners are also involved through the multi-actor partnership. A steering committee with equal representation from the social partners is monitoring the measures.

UTICA and UGTT are strengthened to develop employment policy solutions together. Government representatives are advised to involve the social partners in the development of employment policy solutions. The implementing partners are jointly responsible for implementing international labour standards in Tunisia. Cooperation with the International Labour Organization (ILO) is planned. The social partners at institutional level will also be



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*Events and conferences offer the representatives of the Social Dialogue the possibility for exchange and development joint projects.*

strengthened to communicate and enforce agreements made internally and externally.

The project also promotes cooperation management between actors at national level and in the regions. The focus is on knowledge transfer, network formation and exchange of experience. German experiences, such as the Alliance for Jobs, labour market and social policy reform and collective bargaining autonomy, are discussed in joint dialogue events.

## Success factors

- A central added value of the project lies in its implementation through a multi-actor partnership and the possible active involvement of representatives of the German social partners. This project structure promotes the direct, targeted exchange between the Tunisian social partners and their German counterparts through various formats. The experience gained from the German social dialogue can thus be directly incorporated into the Tunisian social partners' deliberations on modernising vocational training and social insurance.
- The fundamental interest of the German social partners in passing on their experience to the Tunisian social partners allows good opportunities for German cooperation to provide long-term support for Tunisian processes.

## Impact

The Chair for Social Dialogue, which was established as part of the project in cooperation with a partner university, is also well received in its second year. The events are aimed at students, managers and entrepreneurs and are supported by the social partners on a topic-related basis. A survey of 477 companies investigated deficits and potentials of the social dialogue in order to identify future relevant working approaches for the project. In the trade union academy that has been set up, 400 trade union members have already been trained on relevant topics of social

dialogue in the course of educational events. The UTICA Academy has also started its activities and offers further training to companies and managers on current topics.

## Success examples

### Development of an unemployment insurance

The Tunisian social partners have decided to jointly promote the introduction of unemployment insurance in Tunisia, as provided for in the social contract of 2013. In a strategic scenario development process, the first step is to develop a version tailored to Tunisia. The central aspects will be developed in further thematic workshops involving representatives of relevant institutions and the German social partners. A draft law worked out jointly by the social partners is to be submitted to the relevant parliamentary commission by October 2020.

### Survey on the perception of the social dialogue

With the support of GIZ, the Tunisian social partners agreed to conduct a survey on the perception of social dialogue in Tunisia for the first time. The jointly developed questionnaire is aimed at the different structures and actors of social dialogue in the country. The method, which is innovative for the country, is to be carried out annually in order to highlight changes in the perception of the social dialogue to those involved and help them to adapt planned measures to a changing environment at an early stage.

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