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Improving Collective Bargaining in
European Union. Comparison of
Different Industrial Relations
Regimes – ImproCollBar 101052292

Who is protesting in Bulgaria? Actors, demands and possible allies.

European Round Table, 23 October 2023, Leuven, Belgium
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* In the investigated period 69% of protest events are non-union ones

* However 32% of the protest events are organized by unions (with larger share of own events rather than co-sharing the responsibility for the event performance)

Bulgaria: Trade union involvement in protest events in the period 01.01.2021- 01.08.2022 (Data in % out of 154 cases registered)



■ Trade unions are co- initiators of the protest event

■ Trade unions are initiators of the protest event

■ No involvement of trade unions in the protest event

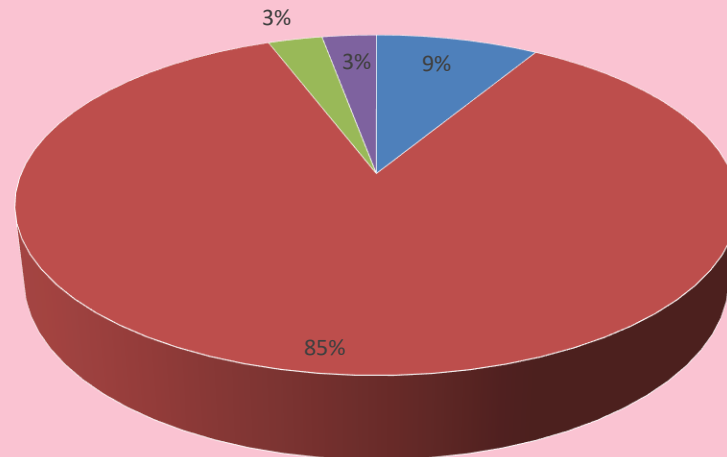
* Non- union protests include both spontaneous actions with no official organization stated to lead the protesters (46% of all non- union protests) and well- organized protests (54% of all non- union protests). Where an organization is stated to lead the protest, it is mainly a civil society one, followed by political parties, employers' organization, workers' collective and so on.

* Trade union protest events are mainly organized by main (official) federations

* Non- main trade union organizations are not that active like the main (official) ones

* In terms of ideological orientation, Bulgarian trade unions can be all related to the category "General ones" (no affiliation regarding religion and political parties)

Type of trade union actor organizing protest events (% of all union protest events)



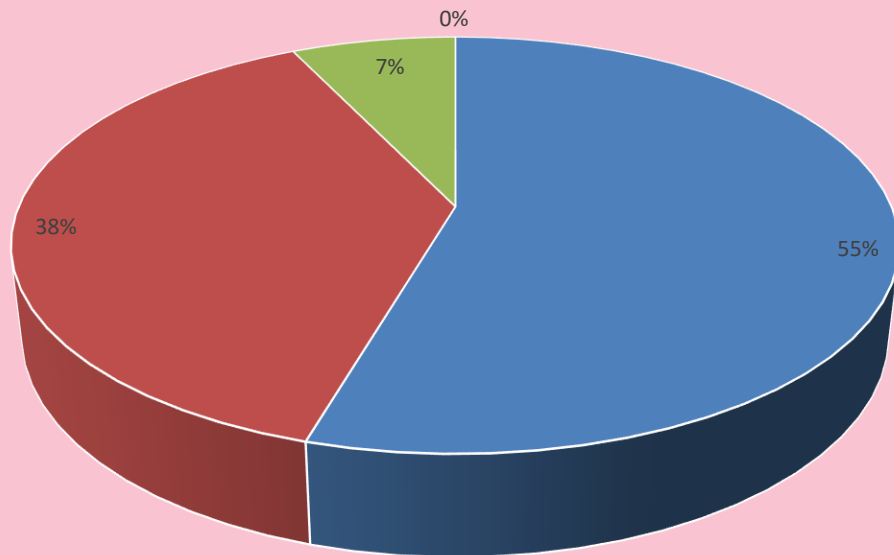
■ Main trade union confederation ■ Main trade union federation ■ Non-main grass-root trade union confederation ■ Non-main grass-root trade union federation



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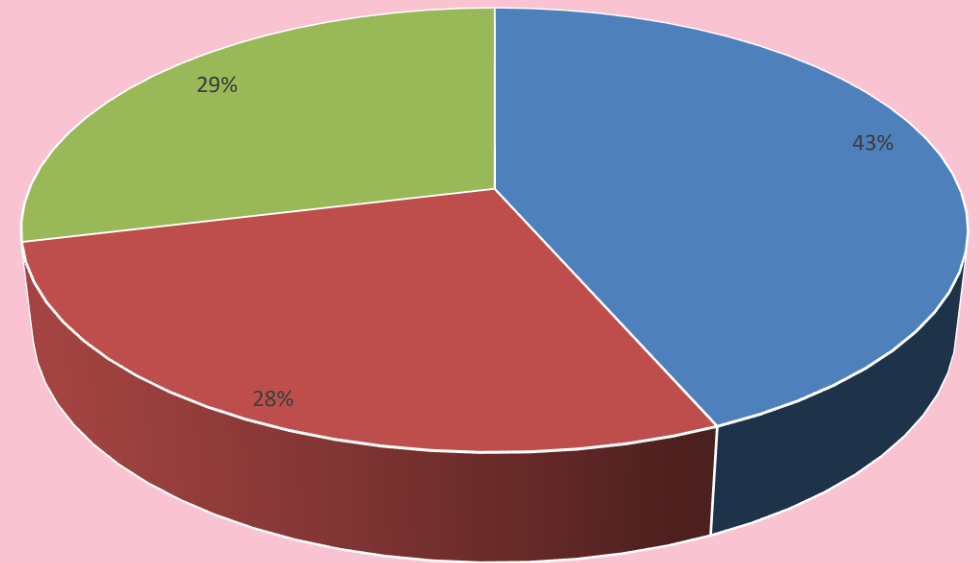
- * In terms of number of participants, most of the time protest events are organized by a small number of people
- * Not surprisingly, the the largest share of demands is targeted towards economy issues (having in mind Bulgaria is the country with the lowest minimum wage in EU). Since corruption and malfunctioning of state institutions is a well- observed phenomena, the democracy demands are also major ones within the country.

Bulgaria: Estimation of number of participants within a protest event



■ dozen” (50) ■ “hundreds” (101) ■ “thousands” (1001) ■ “some/few thousand” (5001)

Bulgaria: Demands in the field of... (% of all demands)



■ Economy ■ Democracy ■ Culture

* Are allies between protesting participants possible?

* Are unions willing to have allies when protesting? Do we observe different behavior compared to campaigning and non- protest events?



(Photo: leaders of the two major and nationally representative trade union confederations)