

SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP IN RUSSIA: STATE, PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract

Social partnership was officially recognized in Russia since the early 90-ies of the last century. Labor Code defines the social partnership as tripartite relationships between employees, employers and the state. It is a practice of regulation of socio-labor relations in Russia in the trade-union and cross-sectoral form. The aim of the paper is to ground theoretically and practically the necessity of improving social partnership in its inter-sectoral form. The given paper describes the results of the sociological study of social partnership in the field of socio-labor relations, as well as in the sphere of non-profit organizations. Also, it focuses on the need for horizontal relations of subjects of the social partnership. Research of socio-labor relations carried out using structural and functional analysis of the activities of state analysis, synthesis of the main aspects on the problem and municipal government. As the methods of an examination of the non-profit organizations have been used following: the analysis of legal documents, analysis of statistical data, analysis of the websites of the regional authorities, as well sites, covering the issues of social partnership in the field of the non-profit organizations, interviews with representatives of state structures. Methods of the problem theory analysis, literature, integration of Russian, European and American theories were used in the work. The connection of social partnership and social policy of the state is marked in the paper, as well as indicated on the possibility of a perspective possibility of an initiative on the part of any social partner as the subject of social policy.

Keywords: Social partnership, Inter-sectoral cooperation, Trade-unionist option, Social policy, Social dialogue.

1. INTRODUCTION

At the present time, the social partnership is a part of the regulation practice of social and labor relations in Russia, turning into real institutions and mechanisms of interaction between employees, employers and the state, as well as regulation of cross-sectoral cooperation between the state, business and society. The responsibility of employers for the employment, and their participation in contractual relations are the subject of theoretical studies, discussions, interaction with the representatives of employees (trade unions) and the state. At the same time, the social partnership develops between stakeholders: civil society, government and business at all management levels (national, regional, sectoral and municipal), that is the trend of our time and the direction of management at different levels.

Before we consider the practice and features of the social partnership in Russia, we give our own opinions and conclusions about the conceptual and theoretical understanding of this phenomenon.

1. The ambiguity of understanding of the social partnership terminology. There are several concepts of the social partnership. Trade-unionist approach to understanding the social partnership means the social partnership at work. Tri-partisanship system is an approach in terms of inter-sector cooperation: the state, business and society. We have studied the definitions of the social partnership given by such authors as Mikheev (2002, p. 25), Kyazimov (2011, p. 18), Budanov, Gostenina (2004, p. 4-6), Zinchenko, Rogov [2013, p. 8], Yakimets (2000), Privalov et al. (2003, p.11), Pikulin (2010), as well the authors team from St. Petersburg (Valitova, 2016, p. 14). Developed in the study typology of the social partnership, its structure, conformity of the definitions and types, show that the majority of authors understand social partnership wider than it is given in the Labor Code. All of the above authors share comprehension of the social partnership as a cross-sectoral partnership, and the social partnership at work as a variant of cross-sectoral partnership. All definitions include coordination of the interests of employees, employers, social and professional groups, and business. Kyazimov observes that the main way of the social partnership is the social dialogue (2011, p. 18). We consider the social partnership as a system of relationships of the state's and society's subjects of the different shapes and status for the benefit of a particular social group and society in general, initiated by any party. The given determination covers inter-sectoral cooperation.

2. The social partnership is a part of social policy. Social partnership is regarded as one of the directions of a social policy. The regional governments or local governments can create the conditions (legal and regulatory, institutional) in order to initiate and improve the of the social partnership.

3. In the analysis of the social partnership and the systematization of its features, the important role plays its nature:

- the social partnership must be horizontal in nature, rather than vertical, due to the need to respect the principle of partners' equality. This type of relationship allows to speed up of identifying and solving of existing problems;
- the strategic goals of the social partnership are related to the social wellbeing of particular social groups and society as a whole. The social partnership, which is realized in the social state, in the variant of inter-sectoral cooperation is aimed at solving of the social issues;
- the initiative can be manifest by any of the subjects of the social partnership: public authorities, as a professional who can address the social issues, and civil society knowing these issues, and business, as a party having the financial resources.

2. STUDY ON THE SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP IN RUSSIA

The authors have carried out a pilot a sociological survey during the 2013-2014 (Ermolaeva, 2014, p.69]. More than 200 people were surveyed. Our respondents work in different organizations including following business activities: the trade, construction, food processing, tailoring and manufacturing of special protection means, provision of legal services, and catering services. The sample was random, two-stage selection. The sample can be characterized as workers under the age of 40 years (68%), the age range of 41-50 years are represented by 23% of the respondents. Sex distribution is almost equally: 52% of men and 48% of women. Mostly of the respondents have secondary or higher education (49% and 45%, respectively). The work experience falls mostly in the range of 4-8 years (36%), respondents with experience of up to 3 years (25%) of 9 to 12 years (20%), and more than 13 years (17%).

The aim of the ongoing study is an analysis of workers' awareness about the social partnership, its forms, levels, responsibilities of employers and employees, as well as an analysis of the possible directions of the social partnership development.

The results of the given study allow us to draw certain conclusions.

1. Such type of labor relations as the social partnership did not become the main and only under market economy conditions. Another type of labor relations, chosen by respondents as existing in Russia, is the type of a competition. The social partnership is likely declared the type of labor relations. 20 years for the formation of the social partnership may not be enough. Overseas, the emergence of the social partnership continues with the 60-ies of the 20th century, that is for 30 years more.

2. According to the survey results, respondents have positive relation to the idea of the social partnership. But the practical implementation at the moment does not satisfy the respondents, they note that the social

partnership is being formed.

3. An implementation of the social partnership in practice of large and medium-sized organizations takes place in the form of collective-contractual regulation. Small businesses do not have collective agreements, and the social partnership is not familiar for them nor in any employment relationship, either in the form of non-profit organizations. Such state of the social and labor relations can be caused by the intention to cut costs on the labor force, as well as the existence of two types of labor remuneration, and formal and informal employment.

4. Surveyed employees generally know the meaning of the social partnership (51%). The largest percentage of them (73%) know what is a collective agreement. The social partnership is a multi-level phenomenon, but it is understandable for the workers at the local level.

5. The respondents put forward proposals for the trade union development at the company rarely. The majority of respondents believe that the social partnership in the companies should develop, but the initiative should belong to the employer.

6. The determination of the social partnership, according to respondents, more consistent with the concept of the social partnership as a cross-sector partnership between the state and non-profit organizations, as well as with the definition of the social partnership as "a system of civilized social relations, that ensures consistency and the protection of the interests of workers, employers, entrepreneurs, various social groups, layers, their associations, and government authorities".

7. Among the principles of the social partnership the respondents highlight the principles of reality, commitment, compliance with laws, as the most used in the interaction between partners.

8. The regional level the social partnership, according to the respondents' opinion, is not developed, although the legal framework suggests otherwise. The majority of the respondents do not know whether there is the social partnership in the region. In this case, it is important to inform, for example, to conduct an annual conference on social partnership involving the regional and municipal level stakeholders to raise awareness of the information, and involvement in general issues, as well as consolidation of all forces to social peace and dialogue.

9. Following the results of the survey such items of the collective agreement as "wages" and "working hours" received the most satisfactory evaluation. The lowest satisfaction of the collective agreement points belongs to "monetary compensation system on holidays and weekends, night hours" and "the indexing mechanism".

The social partnership at the regional level is not perceived by the respondents and negatively evaluated. As a form of the social partnership implementing at the regional level, the respondents mainly selected functioning of the public councils. The majority of the respondents believe that the social partnership is in the process of formation, there are a lot of formalities, spontaneity, and personal ties.

The question of readiness for partnership relations allowed to detect an asymmetry: workers respond that the employer is not willing to partner, and the employees feel that they are ready. This is probably due to the lack of employers' willingness to engage in dialogue, the unwillingness to reckon with subordinate employees. Perhaps, workers themselves are not quite ready for a dialogue with the employer, at least, not all.

Thus, workers and employers have a low level of activity in establishing partnership relations. From the point of view of the social partnership development there is a need an active and interested participation of the population in this process. Partnership assumes an equality and voluntariness of all parties. Thereby, it should be noted that employees of the surveyed enterprises expect greater effect from the social partnership, however, they do not make proposals for changes. The majority of respondents do not know the basis of the social partnership at the enterprise and beyond. In practice, without seeing the work of the trade union or fulfillment of collective and labor contracts, workers are turning a little to the documents. It may indicate an unwillingness to the partnership relations. Also, a desire of paternalism prevails in relations with the employer.

According to the study results, it can be formulated following recommendations to trade union: to improve the knowledge of employees on the social partnership, its forms and levels, as well as the rights of employees. It is also important the presence of a specialist in HR or a lawyer, who would hold classes on the Labor Code among employees of the enterprise or give consultations. Such state is equally necessary to both employees and employers: self-motivated work, based on the principles of the social partnership, gives high labor motivation, high efficiency as well. Relations arising in the workplace at the moment exist as a vertical,

violating such principles of the social partnership, as respect and consideration for the interests of the parties, equality, voluntariness. Readiness for dialogue partners is partial (73% of respondents).

Legislative base of on the regulation of social partnership is there, but does not work completely. The social partnership mechanism needs to be developed, including the regulatory framework. Necessary amendments and additions to the functions and powers of the social partnership at the regional and municipal levels, as well as all levels of realizations of the functions and tasks of the social partnership in the workplace. The social partnership in the workplace, although enshrined in the Labor Code tier structure is perceived as working only on the local level – the level of the enterprise. The respondents do not know and have never heard about the federal, regional and sectoral levels of the social partnership, the activity of the regional bodies of the social partnership, as well as the documents regulating social and labor relations at other levels. The most understandable and close to employees is the level of the enterprise (local), on which there is a conclusion of the employment and collective agreement.

Assessment of the state of the social partnership in the field of inter-sector cooperation (government – civil society) was conducted through the analysis of non-profit societies. For examination of the non-profit organizations (NPOs) following methods have been used: the analysis legal and regulatory documents, statistics, content analysis of regional authorities' sites, as well as sites covering the issues of the social partnership in the field of NPOs, and interviews with representatives of government structures. Experience of working of NPOs in Russia is covered in detail in the media and information is available on the Internet. The different websites present the NPOs' database, projects, journals. Also, details are on the website of the Agency for Social Information. According to this website, there is quantitatively noticeable growth of the NPOs, a scope of their activities is changed. The NPOs are allocated by fields of activity and municipalities.

The allocation of funds to support the NPOs is carried on the results of annual competitions NPOs' projects. Contests implement criterial selection of projects needed to address social issues. The selection is complicated by various problems: a lack of skills of solving problems by NPOs, and a lack of developed criteria for project evaluation. For example, in the selection of competition works is estimated originality, innovation, information support, and population coverage. Projects that have passed the competition are limited in resources for qualitative addressing issues. There are other restrictions, such as lack of skills to solve social problems. It is important that the activity of the municipalities' administration for the development of the social partnership is carried out, but no less important that the citizens know about it in order they become interested participants of activities to its implementation.

The results of an overview of the NPOs show that the largest percentage belongs to organizations working with children and youth, women's organizations, as well as organizations working in the local area in the territorial self-government area. Among the NPOs the lowest percentage belongs to mass media and non-profit and public organizations. The results are summed up for acting NPOs. The overall results show that the NPOs there are mostly in cities (in 2 times than in the region, 67% in the cities). At first glance, it is naturally because the city has a greater number of companies / institutions, etc. However, it can also be assumed, that the development of the citizens' activity in the region would help solve many problems that arise locally, and prevent the development of localism. Agriculture without additional measures on development initiatives does not develop. NPOs are unevenly distributed on the period of establishment: in 1996-1999 were created 35% of NPOs, in 2000-2005 – 28%, and in 2006-2009 – 4%. The smallest number of NPOs were formed during 2010-2013 – 1%. Splash of activity has gone on recession, it has not acquired a quality of tightness, as the initiative must be supported.

Thus, we have revealed the following trends in the NPOs development. NPOs has achieved the high values in 1996-1999. The reduction to the present time, perhaps, indicates a lack of mass support among the population. The quality of NPOs activities became the subject of many publications, but expectations for the NPOs activity results is not entirely fulfilled. The initiative is supported mainly NPOs' activists. Trends in the NPOs development in accordance with the regulatory framework are directed on the decision social problems. In a society there is a process of transmission of the state functions to the social-oriented NPOs, but it is not a simple process.

Informing about the NPOs activities is actively developing on the Internet. But this information is not available to all. Television, as the most demanded type of media, is more oriented towards entertainment. Such type of NPOs activities as informing about its own activities (problem often is posed as one of the important tasks of NPO work) is insufficiently developed. At conferences, roundtables, NPOs' activists point out that about the positive experience of public organizations and NPOs work the mass medias say very little, which is associated with the commercialization of the media (Valitova, 2016). Reflection on this issue would be very useful for the further development of social partnership.

3. CONCLUSION

Thus, studies conducted in the field of the social partnership in the sphere of the labor relations and non-profit partnership. Conducted survey on the social partnership has shown that public awareness on the social partnership and the NPOs activities is low. Trade union organizations have a low level of trust among union members and workers who are not members of trade unions. Therefore, it is possible to identify the following directions of improving the work with the NPOs.

On the one hand, NPOs do not have enough of the confidence of the population which is largely dependent on the quality of work. In order for the development of the non-profit sector could be translational and sustainable, there is need to improve constantly the professionalism of NPOs leaders and staff, and to monitor the social ideas and issues, and to give a financial, information, tax support of NPOs, as well as to establish research and government institutions, for example, the institute for study of the social partnership experience, Ministry of social partnership.

Tools of monitoring (diagnostics) at the regional level needs to be complemented by absolute and relative indicators such as the number of collective agreements in relation to the number of medium and large organizations, municipalities and regions. Social reports should be accompanied by obtaining feedback from the staff of the organizations, the inhabitants of the region and the municipality, their satisfaction with work parameters of the authorities and employers.

Thus, social partnership is a modern, gained acceptance in the world and in our country, the type of social and labor relations. Considering the peculiarities and problems of various kinds of the social partnership in Russia, there is a need for a "Concept of development of the social partnership", which presents the basic determinations, normative and legal documents, as the basis of social partnership at the federal level and the level of the federal subject, as well as the data on the current state of social partnership and suggestions on future directions of development of the social partnership in accordance with modern trends (Kyazimov, 2011, p. 18). Efforts to overcome formalities in the social partnership implementation in the country, and directions obtained by benchmarking procedure could be prospective. Transition to institutionalization of the social partnership can be presented as a more global approach, which symbolizes the reference point to the social dialogue of the different social groups in society, including mutually dependent, being in an unequal position at the moment. There is a necessity in legal and regulatory framework that provides a clear understanding of the responsibility of both sides for the implementation. Creation of the Public Chamber on the various levels of government is an example.

Past of the social partnership is the becoming and emergence of normative legal acts, the stage of formalization. The present, when the quantity should pass into quality, overcoming difficulties, the social partnership is part of our lives. The future is a real partnership with the willingness of both sides to the social dialogue, decent work (decent working conditions, decent wages), reduction of precarious work (Fedorova, 2015, pp. 751-760), decline of secondary labor market, the development and stabilization of the economy and labor market, a natural transition to the social partnership. Design of horizontal structures, the institutionalization of the social partnership, the possibility of reflection on past experience, as well as the use of different variants of social dialogue based on the principle of tripartism and other principles of social partnership makes it possible to move towards a really working mechanisms of the social partnership.

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