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## MANDATORY CONCILIATION IN COLLECTIVE LABOUR DISPUTES IN CROATIAN LAW: AN EFFECTIVE MECHANISM OR A FORMAL PROCEDURE?

**Summary:** *This paper analyses the institute of mandatory conciliation in collective labour disputes under Croatian law, with particular emphasis on the question of whether it constitutes an effective mechanism for the peaceful resolution of disputes or primarily a formal procedure preceding the initiation of a strike. The purpose of the paper is to present the legal nature of collective labour disputes, the normative framework governing conciliation, and its effects in the context of protecting the right to strike and preserving social dialogue. The paper applies normative, comparative, and analytical methods, examining Croatian legislation, international and European standards, legal doctrine, and relevant case law. The analysis shows that conciliation in collective labour disputes under Croatian law is an important procedural prerequisite for the legality of a strike, but also a potentially effective instrument for preventing the escalation of labour conflict. However, its effectiveness depends on the genuine willingness of the parties to negotiate, the expertise of conciliators, the clarity of procedural rules, and the quality of the normative framework. The paper concludes that mandatory conciliation should not be understood as a mere formality, but rather as a substantive and functional mechanism of social dialogue, while certain legislative improvements are necessary in order to eliminate the identified ambiguities.*

**Keywords:** *collective labour disputes, mandatory conciliation, strike, collective bargaining.*

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