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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC UNIONS ENGAGEMENT IN TODAY'S WOKPLACE IN SELECTED INDIAN OCEAN STATES

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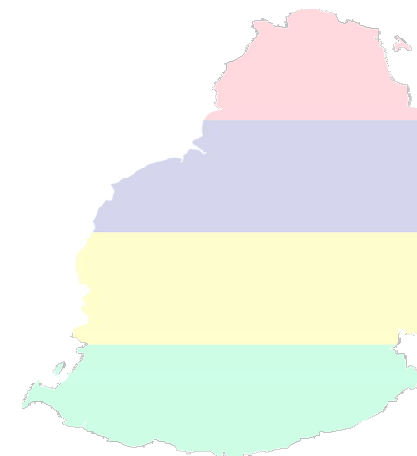
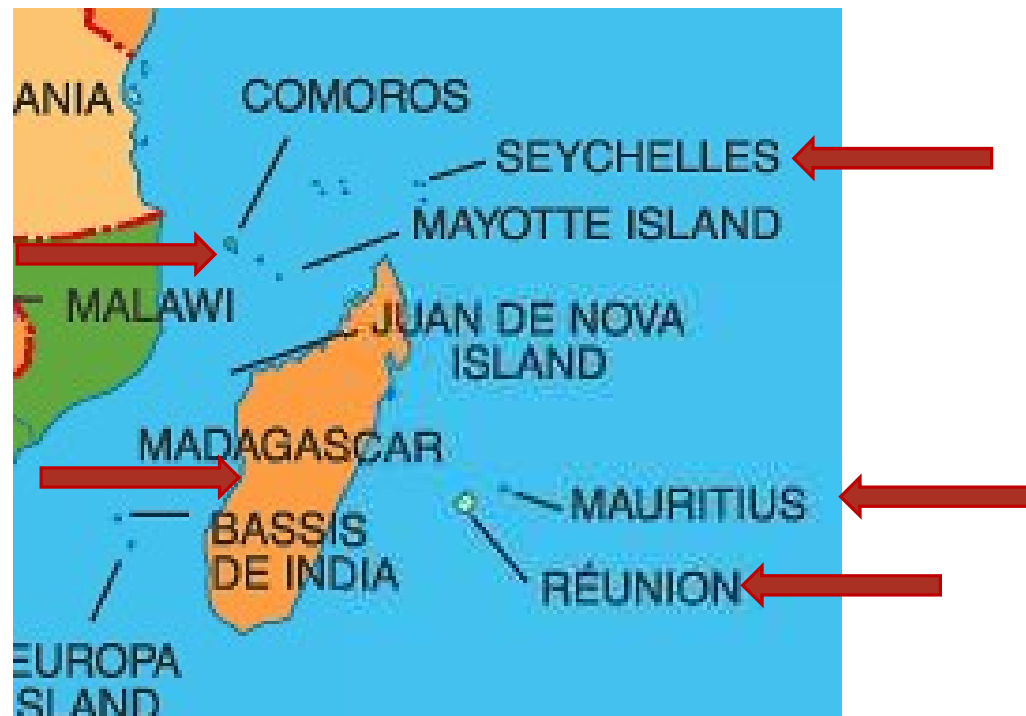
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Indian Ocean Islands in the Survey

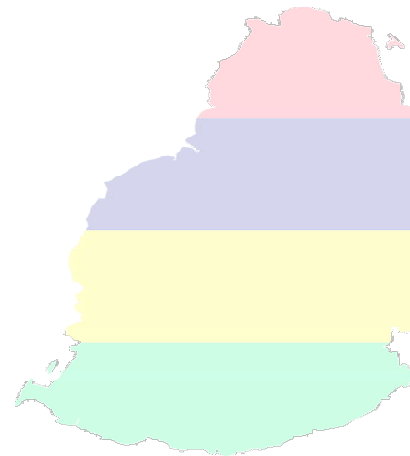




This research addresses the influence of public sector unions in the Indian Ocean and the trends that are likely to influence them in their engagement at the workplace.

A few key issues have been developed to understand the influence of public trade unions in the Indian Ocean Islands.

They are bargaining power, innovation, employee protection and employee engagement.

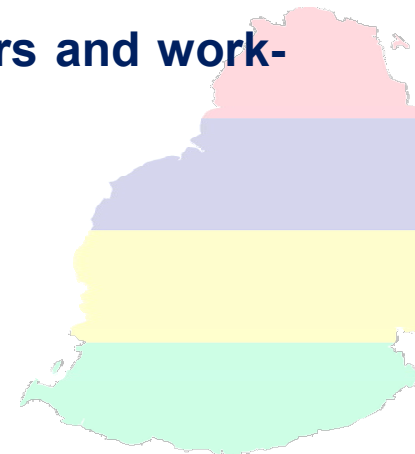




Bargaining power of public trade unions in the Indian Ocean do vary.

In settled economies like Mauritius and the Seychelles, public unions do fight for their employee rights but this remains stronger in Comoros and Madagascar due to their prevailing economic situation.

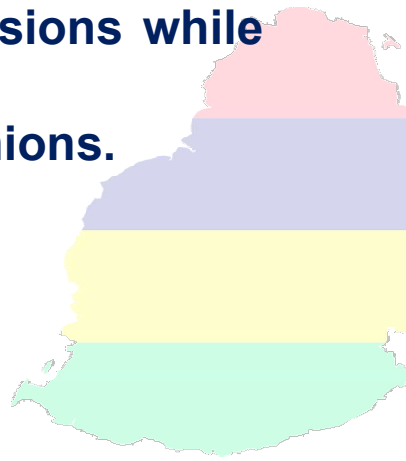
Innovation in public union organisations remain broadly similar in all nations under the survey like the use of information technology, flexible working hours and work-life balance.



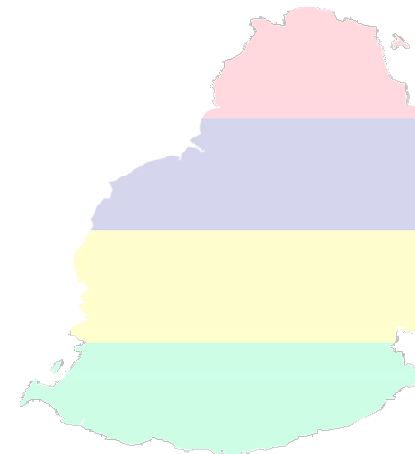
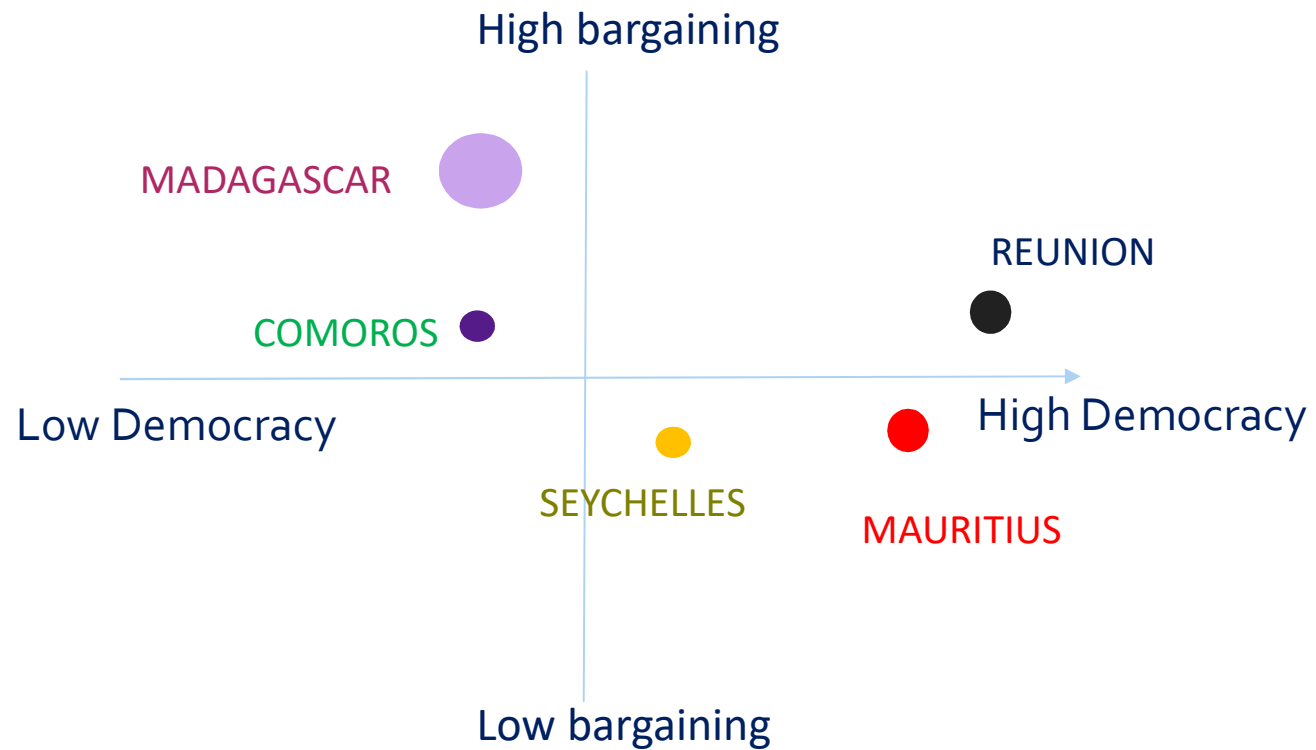


Regarding **employee protection**, scores were moderate although all island state constitutions had legislations favouring them while their application differed.

Employee engagement was considered as moderate in most island states considered from the point of employees at board level and in key decisions while public unions timidly engaged women in prominent positions in public unions.



Comparative bargaining power of public unions



Public unions in **Reunion Island** have remained quite buoyant over the years especially regarding demands for better conditions of work.

At the **Mauritian** level, the bargaining power has remained fairly mild since the right to strike is a last resort in the same case as the Seychelles. There are new agendas for bargaining in Mauritius particularly the increase in the age of retirement, the management of state pensions and wage rises.

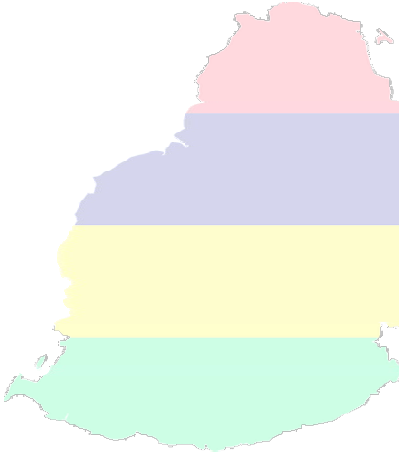
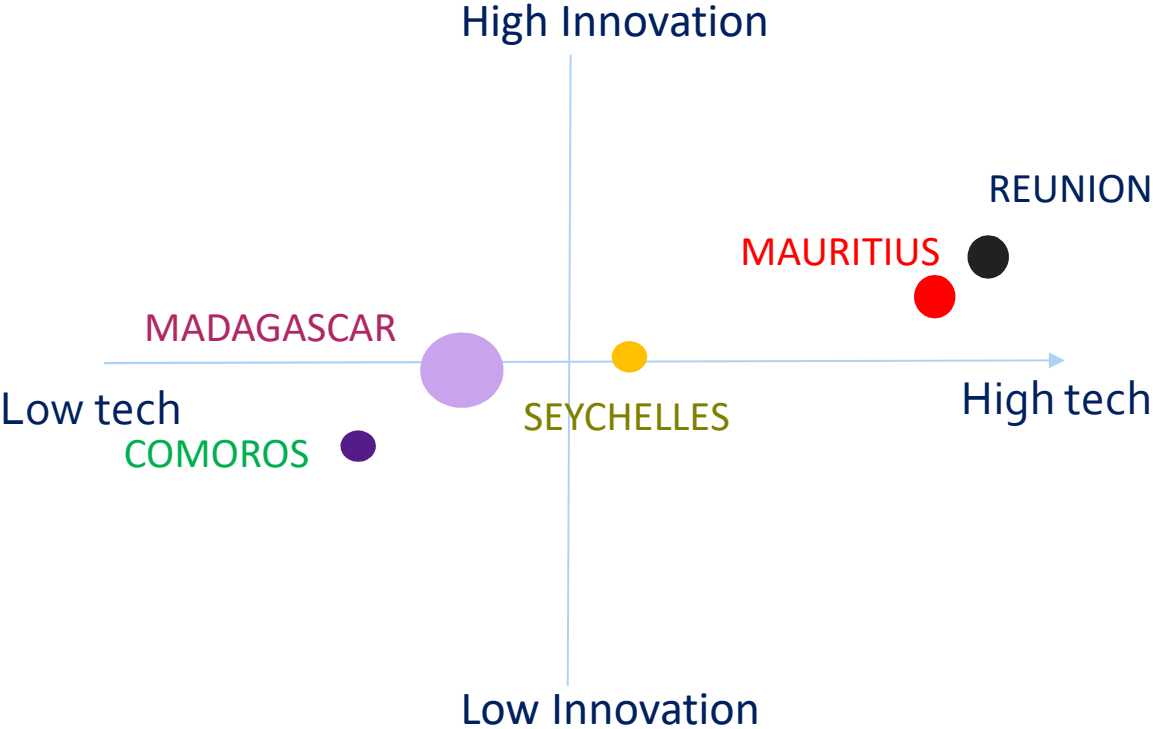
Madagascar scores highest in this area as a result of ongoing negotiations with the State to bring about better welfare for its workers.

Bargaining power in the **Seychelles** remains average although there have been possibilities of finding out abuses and violations to employee rights.

The **Republic of Comoros** are considered as a republic founded on religious principles, there might be the possibility of stating that unions might display high levels of bargaining due to internal political problems affecting the Comoros namely large migration to Mayotte, a nearby French territory.



Innovation in public unions



Reunion Island is quite well developed technologically. It was labelled FrenchTech in 2016 and its digital ecosystem relies on several incubators (Arhimmobilier, 2016)

Mauritius, positioned as a ICT hub has influenced the use and application of such innovation. Political and worker movements do have their websites to channel information and decisions but such use is not widespread.

In the **Seychelles**, a mild use of ICT as innovative tool to communicate with employees exists but the comprehensive application of such a technique is still in its infancy.

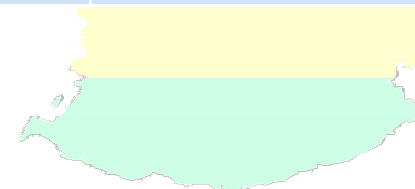
It is in this aspect that less financially-endowed nations like **Madagascar** and **Comoros** score low. With weak IT diffusion, trade unions remain more stuck in traditional forms of communication.

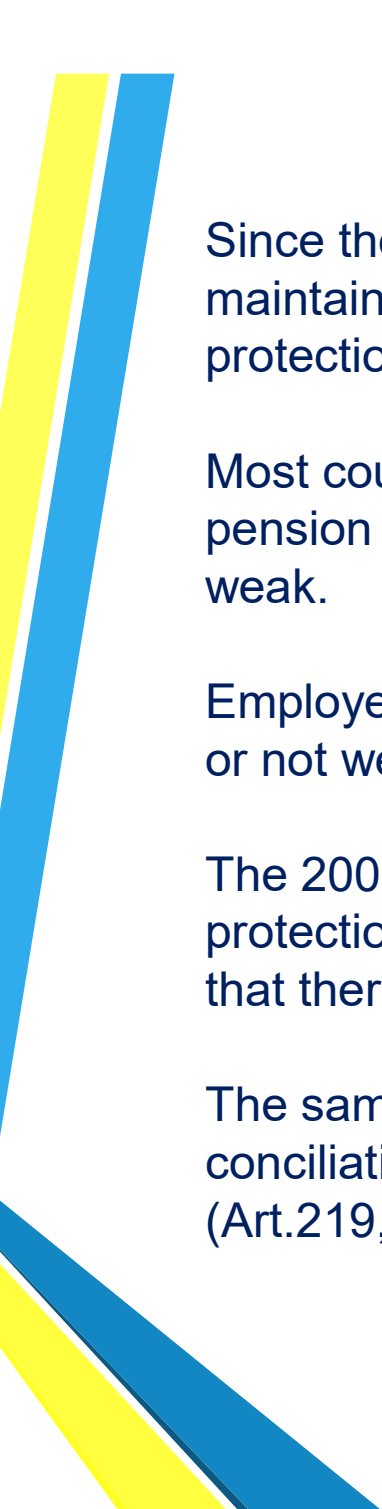
For instance, the **Comoros** used satellite technology to provide internet access to the residents and it looks like a willingness for information technology to be integrated in society. Comoros have now shifted to satellite technology to provide internet access to the residents.



Employee Protection in public unions

Country	Employee rights	Freedom of association	Pension and retirement schemes	Ratification of ILO conventions	Employee data protection
MAURITIUS	Strong	Moderate	Strong	Strong	Moderate
REUNION	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Moderate
MADAGASCAR	Moderate	Strong	Moderate	Weak	Weak
SEYCHELLES	Strong	Moderate	Strong	Strong	Moderate
COMOROS	Moderate	Moderate	Weak	Weak	Weak





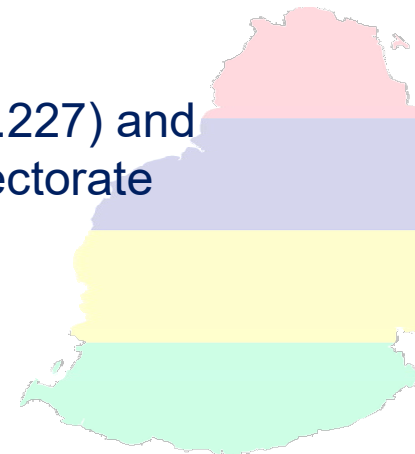
Since there are public unions in all the states concerned, employee protection is maintained. In **Mauritius, Reunion Island and the Seychelles**, employee rights are protection according to the enactment of respective laws as per country concerned.

Most countries scored **well** on issues like employee rights, freedom of association and pension schemes but data protection regarding employees ranged between moderate and weak.

Employee data protection remains average in the scores since legislation has been sparse or not well defined.

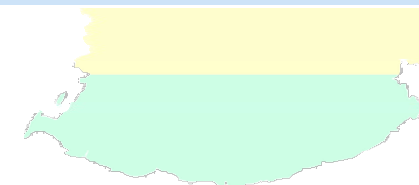
The 2005 law reform on employment in **Madagascar** stipulates a high level of employee protection regarding wages, wage settlement, employee protection, etc. and this proves that there is room for progress in that country (Code du Travail, 2005).

The same applies to the **Comoros** where the right to strike is recognised (Art.227) and conciliation terms are jointly agreed by employee unions and the works inspectorate (Art.219, Afrique.com, 2016)



Employee Engagement in public unions

Country	Engagement at union board level	Democratisation of public institutions	Female participation
<i>MAURITIUS</i>	weak	strong	moderate
<i>REUNION</i>	moderate	strong	moderate
<i>MADAGASCAR</i>	moderate	moderate	weak
<i>SEYCHELLES</i>	weak	strong	moderate
<i>COMOROS</i>	moderate	moderate	weak



It might be correct to say that employees show high level of solidarity when it comes to engage themselves for a common cause in union activities.

Public institutions are strongly rated in the developed economies of the Indian Ocean namely **Mauritius, Reunion and the Seychelles** and they are moderate in the **Comoros and Madagascar** because of some recent political upturns.

Female participation has been included as an element of the checklist concerning employee engagement. The empowerment of women is encouraged nationally in all the island states of the Indian Ocean but their engagement in union activities is still marginal.

	MAURITIUS	REUNION	SEYCHELLES	MADAGASCAR	COMOROS
Bargaining Power	Average			Fairly strong	
Innovation	Strong			Moderate	
Employee Protection	Strong			Moderate	
Employee Engagement	Moderate in General				



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Thank You

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