

Fafo



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RESEARCH COOPERATION – HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND SAFETY - SOCIAL DIALOGUE: lofty thoughts or tools for development?

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STRUCTURE OF THE PRESENTATION

- 1. NORWEGIAN EXPERIENCES IN COLLABORATION BETWEEN RESEARCHERS AND PRACTITIONERS IN THE FIELD OF HES**
- 2. THE RESEARCH IN THIS PROJECT – OTHER EXPERIENCES FROM EUROPEAN PROJECTS**
- 3. THE REPORT - MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND INTERROGATIONS WHEN COMPARING BG, RO, NO.**
- 4. IN THE FUTURE: THE BULGARIAN NETWORK BETWEEN SIX BRANCHES, SOCIAL PARTNERS, PUBLIC AUTHORITIES - THE ROLE OF RESEARCHERS?**

1. NORWEGIAN EXPERIENCES IN COLLABORATION BETWEEN RESEARCHERS AND PRACTITIONERS IN THE FIELD OF HES

- a long-standing tradition of collaboration between enterprises, trade unions, public authorities and researchers to improve HES
- the methods vary from action research to neat stock-taking of chemicals at the workplace

How collaboration between HES researchers is organised varies a lot:

- submit joint applications for projects to those financing research
- set up virtual centres between research institutions without having a joint office
- arrange joint thematic conferences and seminars

2. THE RESEARCH IN THIS PROJECT – OTHER EXPERIENCES FROM EUROPEAN PROJECTS

Fafo's experiences in this specific project:

- Reminded us of the gradual expansion of HES arrangements in the Norwegian labour market and how HES is inscribed in the social dialogue supported by State legislation.
- Allowed us to explain and compare this development line to partners in BG and RO.

The main steps on the path towards more systematic efforts in Norwegian HES:

- An extensive HES framework was first developed in high-risk sectors: starting in the oil industry, then in the petrochemical industry.
- Criterion for the wider dissemination of the HES framework: the level of risk and need for thorough risk analyses

Main tool: Internal Control Regulations embedding HES throughout the entire work organisation.

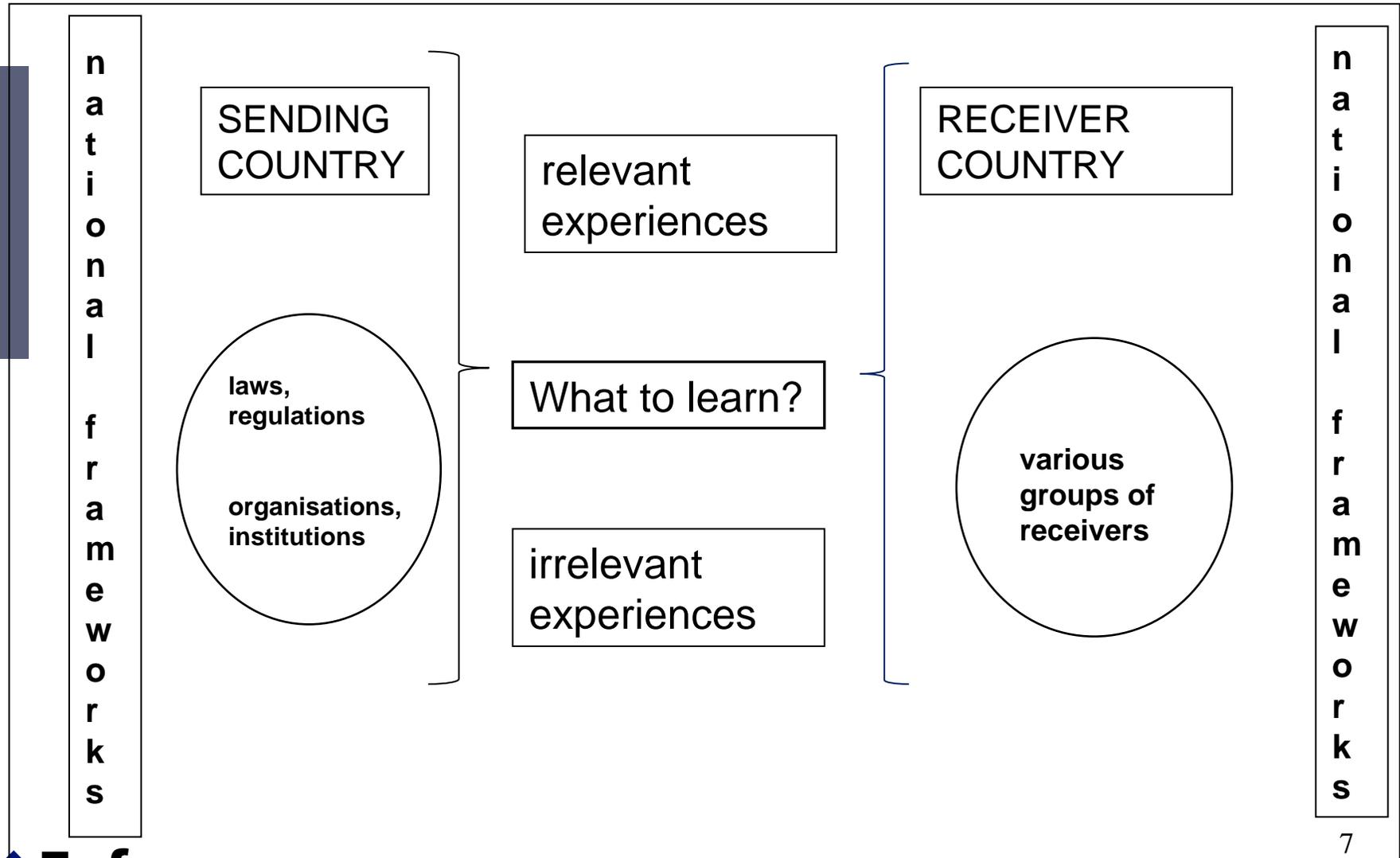
2. The research in this project (ctd.)

- Dissemination of Norwegian HES practices has been slower in parts of the private service industries.
- HES laws and regulations are nearly the same for all sectors of the labour market:
- Universal rules linked to risk assessments and systems of documentation may produce rigidity, in spite of the possibility of local adjustments (reflecting variations in the risk level and the nature of risks in each economic sector or branch).

2. (ctd.) Fafo's experiences from other European projects

- Based on preliminary project PL-NO: how can skill development at regional level form part of exchange of experiences across borders?
- Fafo produced a report to LO on how the social dialogue at national level is grounded in broader societal models, i.e. Scandinavian models for labour market regulation.
- Conclusion: More than searching for glossy examples, there is a need to develop methodologies for how experiences acquired by the social partners can be mutually assessed by those involved in the exchange of experiences (cf. next slide)

Exchange of experiences between countries



3. THE REPORT - MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND INTERROGATIONS WHEN COMPARING BG, RO, NO.

Communication and collaboration between workers' representatives in HES committees and labour unions



The interplay between shop stewards and Workplace Health and Safety Committees.



Collective agreements could play a more important role in improving HES training.



Most enterprises have safety reps that represent all workers. Shop stewards elected by workers belonging to trade unions are also involved in HES.

- Some unions have launched pilot project on having a shop steward specifically supporting the training of employees.
 - does this benefit training in HES?
 - should shop stewards become specialists or rather have a bird's view on all sides of the work organisation?

3. ctd.

- **The outreach of training arrangements for improving HES**



The minimum duration of HES training for employees could be extended so that it also applies to managers



Should HES training programmes be jointly developed between employees and employers?



The consistency between these joint training programmes and the functioning of Working Conditions Committees/Groups to be ensured by means of Training Needs Analyses (TNA).

3. The outreach of training arrangements (ctd.)



TNA is not systematically used in HES training: room for improvement to overcome criticism that the present approach to HES is too much 'one-size-fit-for-all branches/sectors'?



Should HES training be organised between employers, trade unions and labour inspectorates in order to increase the understanding of HES among key players?

=> Is this the right way for trade unions to influence the contents of HES training?

Do unions have capacity both to develop HES courses and to arrange them?

3. ctd.

- **Involving more institutions to support HES training at the workplace**



How to call upon the Labour Inspectorate for improving HES training and HES in general?



Should the Labour Inspectorate control the quality of HES training courses offered to employees/employers?



Improving the wider institutional framework is important to overcome problems with financing HES training courses.



Not only involve but *develop and sustain* a network around Working Conditions Committees/Groups.

4. IN THE FUTURE: THE BULGARIAN NETWORK BETWEEN SIX BRANCHES, SOCIAL PARTNERS, PUBLIC AUTHORITIES - THE ROLE OF RESEARCHERS?

- *The challenge in Bulgaria (as we understand it):*
- set up networks between six branches by means of HES training
- deliver specific training following previous risk assessments and according to changes in technology/work organisation
- take into consideration changes in the labour market: different working time regimes, temporary agency workers, home based and distance work

4. ctd.

- *Possible tasks for research organisations in projects for efficient networking to improve the social dialogue on HSE:*
- Clarify various paths (national trajectories) for working on HES in order to reduce the risk of failure when new approaches to training are introduced
- Carry out ongoing evaluations of projects for training of safety reps (i.e. instead of hiring consultants to evaluate the project management, make use of researchers to provide more thematic input)
- Run a research project in parallel with the main project, such as we did in the BG-RO-NO project now coming to an end

4. ctd. (from title to conclusion)

- RESEARCH COOPERATION, HES AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE: lofty thoughts or tools for development?
- projects carefully set up between practitioners in trade unions and researchers can tie lofty thoughts to the development of tools for crafting policies that promote HES and social dialogue
- if researchers should provide more input, budgets have to be adjusted accordingly
- Encouraging to read in the three-country report that one trade union priority in BG is contributions from researchers in the exchange of experience and good national and European practices to improve social dialogue on Occupational Health and Safety.

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