Labour mobility to Norway: The trade union’s role and policy against social dumping

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Mass movement of workers

Source: Nordic Statistics 2014
Research-questions

• What are the shop steward’s experiences with the labour migration?
• How do the trade unions assess the different regulations that have been introduced?
• What are the conditions for making these regulations effective tools in combating social dumping?
The concept of «social dumping»

- Unacceptable low wages
- Unacceptable working standards: long working hours, poor health and safety standards
- Bad housing (provided by employer)
New regulations

• Statutory extension of collective agreement
  – Contractors are liable for missing wage payment
  – Trade unions have the right to inspect wages and labour conditions

• ID-cards in construction and cleaning
Unacceptable wages and workings conditions - widespread in your industry?

Source: Fafo: study among shop stewards, 2013
Useful measures to reduce unacceptable conditions

- Training of shop stewards: 91%
- Stronger regulations in the collective agreements: 85%
- Statutory extensions of collective agreements: 83%
- More frequent inspections from the Labour Inspectorate: 81%
- Stronger legislation: 78%

Source: Nergaard & Trygstad 2012: study among shop stewards.
Do shop stewards use their tools?

The practical enforcement is partly missing

- Complicated (lack of training)
- «Our employer will do what’s right»
- Conflict of interest
Conclusions

• Weaknesses in the Norwegian model have surfaced
• Informal and illegal activities are persistent
• Need of more empowered and active shop stewards