- You can’t argue with numbers

Transnational representation at company boards
– with a Norwegian perspective

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Being a German employee in a Norwegian owned subsidiary ..... what to do?

- Collaborate with your Norwegian trade unions colleagues
- EWC
- International framework agreement
- Advocate SE company (or a cross border merger)
- National Norwegian law - demand a transnational BLER arrangement
A subsidiary is a subsidiary…(1976)

Group level (‘konsern’) arrangement (employees in all/some subs included)
  - Threshold 30 employees in group (1 BLER, 50+=1/3)
  - By demand, not mandatory
    - By agreement between management and employees/TUs
    - By application to public tribunal (tripart)
  - By and among all employees
  - Company law

(Nearly all) other participation arrangements in Norway:
collective agreements and trade unions
All groups (5+ directors) in Norway

Group arrangement or company only
Rough estimate: 1/3, 24 of 185
All subs incl. One constituency

All subs incl. Three constituencies

Some subs incl. Three constituencies

• Majority or proportional (trade union leeway, NB: local branch
• Electronic vote
• Norwegian rules (=SNB in SEs, = EWC)
A subsidiary is a subsidiary ... in 24 groups

14 interviews Norwegian BLERs

• Why transnational rep?
• Cooperation and trade unions
• A different BLER?
Why?

• by ownership
• by law (compliance)
• by numbers
• by integrated production processes
• by the Norwegian model

All: when restructuring!

No trade union pressure or management resistance
Cooperation and trade unions

• Voting
• Conflict of interests
• Different cultures and skills
• Trade union control over positions
• Language
Cooperation and trade unions

- Voting (electronic vote important)
- Conflict of interests (yes, but recognizable)
- Different cultures and skills
- Trade union control over positions (yes, but manageable)
- Language (Working language or Nordic arrangement)

14 – from no to very powerful trade union
Quality assessment based on culture and trade union present

- The proper ones (the Norwegians and the Swedes)
- The more dubious (the Danes, maybe the Germans)
- The useless (the rest of the word)
Ideal types

In unionized groups:
*The ‘integrated’* – part of transnational participation system
*The ‘side by side’* – adding to the national part syst.

In non-unionized groups:
*The ‘providers’* – information from country
*The ‘just there’* - wallflower

In mixed groups (Norw. TU, none abroad)
*The ‘first among equals’ and the ‘wallflower/provider’*
### Institutional framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation at company level</th>
<th>BLERs</th>
<th>Norway and Denmark</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>France</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By agreement</td>
<td>By law</td>
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<tr>
<td>By law (by and among)</td>
<td>Legally given right to TU</td>
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<td>Legally given right to TU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legally given to EWC (or other)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixture</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
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</tbody>
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**Fafo**
A different BLER?

Representation as a privilege, an individual right
- You can’t argue with numbers
- They’re at part of the company too

Representation as image/mirror
- We’re so integrated, it would be odd not to include them
- We’re an international company

Representation as representing interests
- That foreign gay was more or less useless to us

Representation as maximising influence
- Keep in mind that you’re only representing a minority of the workforce (chair, earlier project)
- It’s important that the group trade union rep serves at the board
Increasing? (probably....)
Non-Norwegian perspective?
Compared to BLERs in SE?
Norwegian arrangement in compliance with EU?