



# Involvement of social partners during times of crisis

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# Labour and social affairs

- Labour market participation rates and extended working lives
- Labour migration
- Integration refugees
- The future of work
- Occupational safety and health
- Work related crime/undeclared work
- Membership density- employers' and workers' organisations
- Gender equality and diversity
- Social security benefits and pension



# Social dialogue

- Close dialogue with authorities
- Good understanding between the social partners. An arena for problem solving and collaboration
- Tripartite body Committee on Labour and Pension- social partners and Minister of Labour
- Ad- hoc working groups
  - Pandemic
  - Integration of Ukrainian refugees





# Involvement of social partners during the pandemic



# Corona restrictions

- National restrictions put in place on 12 March 2020
- Not a full-scale lockdown as in many other countries
  - Schools and kindergartens closed for a few weeks. Public, cultural and sporting events were banned, but people's movement outside allowed
  - A social distancing rule was imposed
  - Quarantine rules put in place for people arriving in Norway from other countries. Restrictions at the borders
- Some local boroughs put in place additional restrictions
  - Oslo (working from home, closure of restaurants, cinemas, etc (Nov 2020-May 2021, Oct 21-March 22)

## Restrictions at the borders

- Initially exempt from quarantine regulations: those who are to carry out socially critical tasks in Norway, and border commuters
- The regulations applied only to those with an employment relationship in Norway, other EU/EEA nationals not allowed entry
- Service providers from EU/EEA countries, who did not come under the category of socially critical tasks, had to follow the quarantine regulations
- A common challenge for many sectors of the economy in Norway was that the regulations put in place by the health authorities were of a general manner which did not take into consideration the specific needs of the various sectors

## Effects on the labour market

- More than 400 000 persons fully or partially without work (15 %) (end March 2020)
  - 90 % temporarily laid off
- NHO estimated the average unemployment rate for 2020 at 9 percent of the workforce
- The Frisch Research Centre:
  - All income and education groups affected
  - People with low income, low education, and low-income family background over-represented
  - Women more likely to lose their jobs than men. Young people more vulnerable than older people. Immigrants more at risk than Norwegian-born

## The role of the social partners

Strong collaboration between social partners and government from the outset

- Inputs to the economic support packages
  - Important: measures to support companies and employees
  - Measures for skills development for laid-off workers
  - Continued economic and financial measures. Tune from damage control to stimulation measures when the restrictions were lifted
  - NHO had frequent meetings with the health authorities where concerns of the various sectors were passed on
- Changes to temporary layoff regulations
  - The number of days the employer pays full salary reduced from 15 to 2 days after notice of temporary layoff
  - Revisions of compensation
- Cross-border workers and quarantine regulations
  - List of those exempt from quarantine regulations (socially critical tasks in Norway, and border commuters)
  - Impacts in various sectors, need for access to economic support for laid-off migrant workers



## Role of social partners cont'd

- The challenges brought about by the corona pandemic highlighted the role of the social partners. The active role of employers' as well as workers' organisations was crucial in terms of establishing schemes for temporary lay-offs and economic support to help salvage struggling businesses. NHO has also seen an increase in membership over the last year and a half. The role of the actors of the world of work, and the importance of strong tripartite institutions, was brought to light.
- General trust in population towards government measures

## NHO support to member companies

- Daily updated information on rules and regulations, guidance on for example how to apply for economic compensation, documents for migrant workers
- Webinars, attended also by Ministers and repr. of health authorities
- Surveys- situation and concerns brought to the attention of the government (need for adaptation of regulations)
- Present in national and local media
- Use of social media



# Integration of Ukrainian refugees



# Ukrainian refugees in Norway

- 56 000 applications for asylum (per Sept.2023)
  - 25 000 women, 13 000 men, 17 000 children
  - 8 out of 10 arrivals in 2022
  - A relatively high number of people above 55
  - About 16 000 settled in Norwegian municipalities
- Highly skilled, but low levels of English
- Labour market participation rate around 11% (by June 2023)
  - Majority in introduction programme and language training

# Relevant laws and regulations

- Norway grants all Ukrainian refugees temporary collective protection in accordance with our Immigration Act. As with the EU Temporary Protection Directive, this entails a temporary residence permit (initially one year, can be extended up to three years)
- Access to accommodation/housing, access to social welfare and means of subsistence, access to medical treatment, access to education and schools/kindergartens and access to employment
- In accordance with law on integration, refugees granted asylum (yrs18-55) are entitled to an up to 2 years introduction programme (Norwegian courses, skills development, possible work placement, etc)- this course is supposed to be flexible (can be as short as 3- 6 months depending on skills level of the participant) and individually tailored to the participants



# Laws and regulations con't

- Temporary changes in regulations
  - Right, but no duty to attend introduction programme
  - Simplify schemes for mapping of skills before settlement
  - Facilitate rapid settlement
  - Access to higher vocational training and higher education in the introduction programme
  - Exception to the requirement that the introduction programme must include Norwegian language training. Can also provide training in English

## Findings from recent report

- Labour market participation rate low
- Language barrier- flexible and digital solutions needed
- Facilitate matching employers and refugees
- Sector-specific skills programmes
- Better skills recognition and skills development
- Use of wage subsidy
- Need for better coordination- Public employment office, refugee services, education
- Relevant information to employers

# Role of social partners

- As of March 2022, several ad-hoc working groups were put in place with the government and the social partners:
  - Weekly meetings between the social partners, the Directorate of integration and diversity (IMDi) and the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV)
  - The group focussed on issues related to the labour market; assessment and skills mapping, matching of labour market needs with the skills of the refugees, recruitment process, use of labour market measures such as temporary wage subsidy and work placement, access to Norwegian courses
  - Coordinate and make relevant information accessible
  - As of September 2023- participating in working group on labour market integration with Ministry of Labour

# Role of social partners con't



## Perseptives of NHO

- Private sector-employers have a key role in providing the services refugees need, whether it is housing or health care or assessing skills and qualifying for participation in the labour market
- Many of NHO's member companies are eager to support and many are willing and able to recruit Ukrainians
- There are currently labour shortages in several sectors in Norway, which should also

make integration in the labour market easier

- Need for better systems for skills recognition and removal of qualification requirements
- At NHO, we provide information to our member companies via our website, and we organise webinars on relevant topics

# Labour market inclusion

**Job creation-** most important contribution is to create and preserve jobs

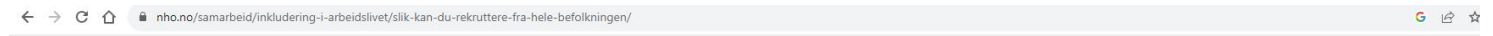
## Ensure conducive conditions for inclusion

- Matching skills with demands of employer
- Relevant measures for qualification and skills development
- Measures to reduce the employer's recruitment risk

**Demonstrate valuable experiences** with labour market inclusion among member companies

**Inform member companies** about measures and tools available

**Collaboration** with the government and other social partners



NHO / Inkludering i arbeidslivet / Slik kan du rekruttere gjennom inkludering



## Slik kan du rekruttere gjennom inkludering

NHO ønsker å hjelpe arbeidsgivere med å finne arbeidskraft. Her får du inspirasjon og hjelp til hvordan din bedrift kan lykkes med dette gjennom flere kanaler for rekruttering.



Thank you for your  
attention

