

SOCIAL PARTNERS:

out with early exit

- in with lifelong learning and
career development?

A blurred photograph showing the lower half of several people walking on a city street, likely in a transit area. The image is out of focus, emphasizing movement and a busy urban environment.

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SOCIAL PARTNERS:
OUT WITH EARLY EXIT, IN WITH LEARNING
AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT?

SUMMARY

The purpose of the paper is to present findings from a new Nordic survey on social partners' policy and practice in regards older workers. The goal of the survey was to find out to what extent the social partners have developed policies and outlined strategies, which explicitly address the demographic change and promote opportunities for lifelong learning and career development among their senior members (45+). Workforce in the Nordic countries tend to be highly organised – especially the older workers. The social partners' involvement in the discussion of sustainable society and the contribution of lifelong learning to the needs and potential of older workers is crucial, as the demographic situation already today, and in particular the one to be expected within the next about 40 years, is historically without a precedent. The idea of continuous learning and the need for a meaningful work has been included in the agreements between the working life parties in all the Nordic countries. However, not all people are provided with – or take an advantage of – the possibilities to continue learning relevant to their career development. Studies show that trade unions are in “an especially difficult position” regarding this matter, but also that they should develop clearer strategy in response to demographic change, and communicate it to their members. The OWN-survey was carried out as a part of the work in the network Older workers in the Nordic

countries (OWN) supported by the Nordic Council. The findings showed, on one hand, that while some social partners have started very good work, for many the issues of lifelong learning and opportunities for career development for older workers are not on their agenda. Besides differences between the unions in regards many aspects and within most countries, the findings also revealed systematic differences between the Nordic countries. Targeted policy measures regarding the older workers showed to be in place in Denmark and Norway, while this seems to be least the case in Sweden. Finland and Iceland have been prioritizing general policies. Targeted measures provide strongest, and in many cases much needed support to older workers' competence and career development. However, even a strong lifelong learning policy seems not alone to guarantee real opportunities for and participation in learning during the latter half of the lifetime job careers, especially if the implementation of these policies is not followed up. On another note, also general policies can provide the necessary support, provided that other policy domains and practice are aligned with them. Overall, there is a need for a more active approach from social partners, in policy and practice, to promote lifelong learning and career development to their senior members during their last 15-20 years in working life. In this issue the social partners can and should play an active role – indeed, a leading role if needed – among the other key actors in society.

KEYWORDS:

lifelong learning, social partners, older workers, prolonging careers, Nordic countries, senior policy, demographic change

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Older workers in the Nordic countries (OWN) is one of the networks within the Nordic Network for Adult Learning (NVL) supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The task of OWN is to promote discussion on the employability of older workers and the opportunities available for them in work and learning. The work reported here is a follow-up of the previous work in the network as documented in the report *Active Learning and Ageing at Work: New visions and opportunities for older workers in the Nordic countries* (Tikkanen, et al. 2008). The report discussed the key role social partners can play when it comes to lifelong learning of and for older workers, as well as the dilemmas they have been facing regarding their oldest, typically also their most loyal members. The report concluded that while we know much about the social partners' policy and practice concerning both lifelong learning and older workers separately, there is no systematic and cross-Nordic data available at the crossroads of

these two. In other words, there is no systematic knowledge available about unions' formal policies and practice concerning competence (capability, capacity) development and career extension of older workers through lifelong learning. This survey aims to fill this void in the Nordic context.

The purpose of the OWN-survey was to provide a systematic account concerning the formal policy and to some extent the practice of social partners in regards lifelong learning and the demographic change, particularly the ageing of the workforce in working life in the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden). We were looking for an answer to the question, whether, and in case yes to what extent, the social partners have formulated policies and outlined strategies, which explicitly address the demographic change and promote opportunities for lifelong learning and career extension among and for their senior members.



There is no systematic knowledge available about unions' formal policies and practice concerning competence (capability, capacity) development and career extension of older workers through lifelong learning.“

BACKGROUND

■ A CHALLENGE: OLDER MEMBERS ARE LOYAL – IN RETURN OLDER PRINCIPLES RETAINED BY THE UNIONS?

Workforce in the Nordic countries has traditionally been highly organized. *Trade union density* rates – union membership as a proportion of the eligible workforce – were the highest found in Europe in 2008: Finland 90%, Sweden 80-89%, Denmark and Norway 70-79%¹ (Eurofound, 2009). Even if there has been a declining trend in the membership rates generally in Europe during the third millennium, this decline has not taken place evenly in all Nordic countries or between the organizations within each country. Indeed, between the years 2003 and 2008 the *number of members* has increased in Finland (5.7%) and Norway (4.5%) (Eurofound, 2009), while some decline has taken place in Sweden (-6.8%) and Denmark (-3.3%)². A further observation, which is of special importance to our purpose here, is that it is in particular in the older segments of the workforce, in which the organization rates are high, being highest among the workers aged about 50 years and above (e.g. Kjellberg, 2010; Nergaard & Stokke, 2010). When we consider this fact against the Cedefop's conclusion based on their work on older workers and lifelong learning (Tikkanen & Nyhan, 2006a), namely, that the voice of older workers is not heard in this discussion, the work by social partners appears crucial if we want to bring about a change to the current relationship between older workers and lifelong learning. This perspective has been one of our main starting points in this study.

The loyalty of older workers makes it least problematic for the social partners to reach to these 'hard-to-reach' potential adult learners and open a dialogue on this topic, which often can be a highly sensitive issue for older workers. Although no systematic knowledge exists on this matter, this communication relationship is likely to be effective also the other way around. That means that in the current situation in working life, it is likely to be easier for older workers to express their views and needs related to their learning and career development to the union representatives than to their supervisors/managers or adult educators.

We define older workers here as people approaching their 50th birthday and beyond³. In essence, then, we are talking about people who have one third or even more of their career ahead of them. Indeed, lifelong learning from the perspective of older workers, is a matter of no less of a magnitude than the whole latter half of working career within a lifetime perspective (Tikkanen, 2008).

The rhetoric of lifelong learning is not new, but the practice extending to the second part of the working life still is – assumingly, in most cases completely lacking. The thinking of continuous learning and the need for a meaningful work is included in the agreements between the working life parties in all the Nordic countries. However, not all people are provided with or take the advantage of the possibilities to organized learning activities for maintaining and improving their employability and career development. In 2003 ILO argued that lifelong learning has become the new employment security objective on the agenda of trade unions, as “lifelong learning is becoming as important an entitlement for today's employee as the right for a pension became in the past” (ILO, 2003, 11).

¹ However, the organization rate, i.e. the rate of salaried workers as members in any one of the trade unions, is lower, for example being 53.1% in Norway in 2008 (Nergaard & Stokke, 2010). This is because the “eligible workforce” in the calculation of union density rates is not a straightforward concept, but to an extent a matter of definition (Eurofound, 2009).

² No comparable data available from Iceland in the Eurofound (2009) study.

³ By defining the 'older workers' as those 45 years and above (Tikkanen, 2008), we are following the definitions used by statisticians in the European Union (Descy, 2006), among others. It has also been pointed out that it is impossible to establish when one becomes an “ageing” or “older” worker, due to the fact that this process is highly individual (Naumanen, 2005).

Nevertheless, until recently expanding the job-careers of older workers, has not been on the agenda of the social partners (Tikkanen, 2006). Traditionally the major focus for the unions has been negotiating shorter working time and early exit pathways. The origins to this tradition are in heavy industrial work and long work days, which were physically very demanding for workers. Since the early days of the unions, work-related demands and challenges have gone through dramatic changes. The question is, to what extent the union policies have changed accordingly? In today's knowledge society also the learning and development needs are very different than in the industrial society. Even if the unions have started to realize the need for options for longer working careers also in regards the older workers, their activity to promote these options on the grass-root level still tends to be very low. A large European study concluded that trade unions are in "an especially difficult position" (Ageing and employment, 2006, p. 163.) when it comes to seniors in the labour market, but also that they should develop clearer strategy in response to demographic change, and communicate it to their members.

■ THE NORDIC CONTEXT: HIGH UNION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY LEVELS IN LIFELONG LEARNING

Both the participation rates in lifelong learning and union membership have been high in the Nordic countries, albeit somewhat lower in Norway. We refer here to our two previous accounts on these topics in Tikkanen (2009) and Tikkanen et al. (2009). As discussed in these, when it comes to union membership, there are also some differences between the Nordic countries. Furthermore, when reading these statistics, it is important to keep in mind that both in regards the workers' unionisation and participation in lifelong learning, there are different measures in use. These tend to show somewhat different results. In regards the former, both the actual number of the members and proportional measures ('membership rate', 'density rate') are used to describe the workers' organisation activity. It has been suggested that union density would be a better indicator for evaluating union strength and influence than by looking at the membership rates alone (McKay, 2006; Visser, 2006). Union density is a membership indicator, which shows the ratio of the currently enrolled members over all those employees potentially eligible to be members⁴. When it comes to the adults' learning participation rates, the measures used vary, most importantly in regards the time period referred to in the past within which the participation is to be counted in, and the types of learning activity that the participation refers to.



Sweden has been the most densely organised country, not only of the Nordic countries but also in Europe.”

Trade union membership and density

A look into the trends in union membership and membership density levels generally in Europe, reveals several trends: membership and density levels are in decline, there is an increasing concentration of members employed in public sector, membership is becoming increasingly feminised, and unions in general consists of older members; the membership levels are particularly low among young workers and that retired workers consist a greater proportion of union members (McKay, 2006; Waddington, 2005). As mentioned earlier, not all of these trends have been witnessed in all, or equally among, the Nordic countries. Sweden has been the most densely organised country, not only of the Nordic countries but also in Europe (Waddington, 2005). Early in the new millennium, the decline in Denmark, Finland and Sweden in the union membership was marginal, a fact which is related to the role that trade unions have had in the administration of unemployment

benefit and insurance (Waddington, 2005) (also in Iceland)⁵. Nevertheless, the losses in union membership in Denmark, Finland and Sweden have been related to changes in the unemployment insurance systems (Lind, 2009). Union density rates among older workers are still high and higher compared to younger workers (Nergaard & Stokke, 2010). In Sweden 78% of the people in the age group 45-65 years are members of a trade union compared to 71% among the whole population of workers 16-65 years (Kjellberg, 2010). When it comes to the development between organizations, in all the Nordic countries but Iceland, from which there is no comparable data available, blue-collar centres have been losing ground, with corresponding increases in the share of white-collar and/or professional centres (especially the latter) (Eurofound, 2009, p. 13). Also in the Nordic countries the organization rates tend to be significantly higher in the public sector than in the private sector, for example in Norway it is double (Nergaard & Stokke, 2010).

It is not easy to find statistics on workers' organisation across the Nordic countries which is comparable with high reliability. Our presentation in Table 1, which shows the trade union density rates and their development in the Nordic countries, is based on recent OECD labour force statistics. The presentation in Table 1 shows that union membership, as a proportion of the eligible workforce (union density) in 2008, was just below 70% in Denmark, Finland and Sweden. This rate was significantly lower in Norway, just above 50%.

TABLE 1.
Development of trade union density^A in the Nordic countries

COUNTRY	1999	2005	2006	2007	2008
Denmark	74.9	71.7	69.4	69.1	67.6
Finland	76.3	72.4	71.7	70.3	67.5
Iceland	81.6	92.1	88.9	86.4	n.a.
Norway	54.8	54.9	54.9	53.7	53.3
Sweden	80.6	76.5	75.1	70.8	68.3

Source: OECD.StatExtracts http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=UN_DEN. ^ATrade union density corresponds to the ratio of wage and salary earners that are trade union members, divided by the total number of wage and salary earners (OECD Labour Force Statistics).

Furthermore, Table 1 shows that a decline in the union density is taking place in all countries but Iceland (statistics missing from the year 2008), although with different rates (Table 1). While the drop has been minimal in Norway within the about ten years' period in question, it has been about 7-9 percentage units in Denmark and Finland, and somewhat more, about 12 percentage units, in Sweden. When it comes to Iceland, a similar linearity in the development does not exist, but between the years 2005 and 2007 a declining trend appears there too. However, in 2007 the union density rates were far higher in Iceland (about 16 percentage units) than in the other Nordic countries. Finally, it is notable in Table 1 that in Finland and Norway the decline in the membership density rate has taken place even if, as found out by the Eurofound (2009) survey, the actual number of members has increased between 2003 and 2008.

Participation in lifelong learning

Participation rates in lifelong learning (LLL) - in the four weeks preceding the measurement - in the Nordic countries are high, also in international comparison (European Commission, 2008). Eurostat findings show that in 2005 the five Nordic countries were among the six countries with highest participation rates among adults 24-65 years. Also participation in lifelong learning has been

⁵ "The Ghent system is the name given to an arrangement in some countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden, and Belgium) whereby the main responsibility for welfare payments, especially unemployment benefits, is held by trade/labor unions, rather than a government agency. The system is named after the city of Ghent, Belgium, where it was first implemented." Union membership tends to be higher countries with the Ghent system. (Source: Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ghent_system) While the unemployment insurance is mandatory in most countries (including Norway) while it is voluntary (although state subsidized) in Denmark, Finland and Sweden (Lind, 2007).

most active in Sweden (34.7%), while Denmark, Iceland and Finland have had rather similar rates (between 25-30%). These rates have been somewhat lower in Norway. The latter may be surprising against the fact that historically the country was the first to get a specific law on adult education (NOU 2007). Furthermore, within the five year period, 2000-2005, the increase in the participation rates in the Nordic countries was among the highest in Europe (Tikkanen, et al, 2008). The only exception in regards the latter was Iceland, which already had the highest participation rate of all countries in the year 2000. The participation rates of the oldest group, those in the age range 55-64 years have in particular been higher in the Nordic countries compared with the rest of Europe: in Sweden 44%, Iceland 40%, Denmark 38%, Finland 29% and Norway 25% (Jonasson, 2007).

A European wide observation is that after the year 2005 the participation rates in lifelong learning have started to slightly decrease. The European Commission has set a benchmark for participation in lifelong learning in 2020 15%. In all the five Nordic countries the participation rates were already above this rate when the benchmark was set. Table 2 presents the latest available comparable LLL-statistics across the Nordic countries and in EU27 in three different age groups (data from 2008). Additionally, the participation rates to continuing vocational training (CVT) and employment rates for older workers (55-64 years) are shown.

TABLE 2.

Participation rates in lifelong learning^{A)} and continuing vocational training (CVT), and employment rates of older workers in the Nordic Countries and in the EU27. Countries ranked by the age group 50-64 years. (%) - Source: Eurostat/EC (2009 & 2010)

COUNTRY	AGE ^{A)}			PARTICIPATION IN CVT ^{B)} 2005	OLDER WORKERS (55-64 YEARS)	
	20-49 2008	50-64 2008	50-74 2007		EMPLOYMENT RATE 2009	ACTIVITY RATE 2009
Denmark	33.7	30.2	21.7	35	57.5	60.3
Iceland	28.1	25.1	16.7	n.a.	80.2	83.3
Finland	28.1	23.1	13.7	39	55.5	59.1
Norway	22.9	19.3	10.2	29	69.2*	n.a.
Sweden	n.a.	n.a.	12.2	46	70.0	73.9
EU27	11.6	9.5	4.3	33	46.0	49.1

^{A)} Lifelong learning refers to persons of the indicated age-groups who stated that they received education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey. ^{B)} As a percentage of employees. *) Year 2008

While we find differences between the Nordic countries (Table 2), all the three types of participation rates – and for lifelong learning in all the three age groups shown – are significantly higher in all the Nordic countries than what is the EU27-average. Furthermore, the table shows how the participation rates in CVT are higher in the Nordic countries – with the exception of Norway – than the EU27 average. However, these differences are much smaller than in regards lifelong learning. Finally, Table 2 shows that the high participation rates in LLL and CVT in older age groups are also reflected in both high employment and activity rates for older workers in these countries compared to the EU27 average. Again the differences in comparison with the EU27-average are large, although varying a good deal across the Nordic countries.

All in all, the statistics shown in Table 2 speak on behalf of a “good” situation of older workers in the Nordic countries both when it comes to participation in LLL and in the labour market when compared to the overall European situation. In our study we are aiming at looking deeper into this very positive situation, at least from the outset, particularly with our eyes set to future prospects and possibilities through targeted policies by the social partners.

METHODOLOGY

■ SAMPLE

The survey was carried out as part of the work in the small network *Older workers in the Nordic countries (OWN)* (Tikkanen, et al. 2008) The web-based survey was targeted to all the employees' and employers' confederations (N=28) in five Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Prior to the survey, partners in each country were in contact with these organizations (telephone, e-mails). The purpose was to invite them to participate in the study and to find the best possible person to answer to the survey. All of the confederations agreed to join the study. Appendix 1 shows a complete list of the organizations included in each country. Only the confederations, not their member organizations, were contacted⁶. As the focus was on their formal policies, it was in principle sufficient with one answer from each of organization. We were looking for these answers from representatives in these organizations as high as possible. From a few organizations we received two and from one three responses. All but two of the total of 28 social partners answered to the survey. A new opportunity to respond was offered to the two missing organizations (LO & NHO in Norway) in September 2010. Regardless of their initial interest and also a later promise to answer, no response was received from either one at the end.

Table 1 presents a description of the background of the respondents for each country. As the table shows, a total of 31 responses were received. Women were somewhat overrepresented (19 women versus 12 men). Well above half of the respondents themselves presented older workers (defined as 45 years and older).

TABLE 3.

Age and gender distributions of the respondents in each country and total

AGE	DK	FI	SE	IS	NO	All (N)	All (%)
Under 30 years			4		1	5	16
31–40 years	1					1	3
41–50 years	3	1	1	1	2	8	26
51–60 years		7	2	2	1	12	39
Over 60 years	2		1	1	1	5	16
ALL	6	8	8	4	5	31	(100 %)
Women	3	5	6	1	4	19	61
Men	3	3	2	3	1	12	39

⁶ In Finland the survey-link was also sent to some of the member organizations. However, to make the findings comparable with other countries, only the answers from 1-2 top-level representatives from each organization has been included in this document.



■ QUESTIONNAIRE AND DATA ANALYSIS

The questionnaire included a total of 19 questions. These were jointly formulated in the OWN-network, largely based on the previous work in it (Tikkanen et al, 2008). All the OWN-network members are experts in the thematic in their respective countries. Prior to sending out the survey, it was presented to the social partners for their comments. This process led to some important improvements and clarifications.

All the questions were structured as multiple choices. For most of the answers it was possible to provide additional free-worded information (those are not included in the analysis presented in this paper). When it comes to the policy formulations, we invited the respondents to share the relevant policy text or its key contents, if any (e.g. by copy and paste). In the beginning of the questionnaire a definition of the main concepts used, 'older workers' and 'lifelong learning', was provided. All the respondents could answer to the questionnaire in their own language, except in Iceland where the language used was English. More details of the methodology are available from the main author upon request.

The main findings from the survey, presented in the next section, are shown for each country separately and as a total. In this paper we have not analyzed the results separately for employees' and employers' organizations. Those will be available in an article under preparation.

RESULTS

■ POLICY FORMULATIONS EXPLICITLY ADDRESSING OLDER WORKERS

The first questions in the survey were an inquiry into whether the social partners had formulated policy when it comes to the demographic changes in general and the situation of senior workers in particular. Table 4 below shows how many organisations in each Nordic country had adopted these policies at the time of the inquiry.

TABLE 4.

Social partners' policy formulations regarding the older workers (n)

EXPLICIT POLICY FORMULATIONS FOR	DK (n=6)	FI (n=8)	SE (n=8)	IS (n=4)	NO (n=5)	All (N=31)	All (%)
'Demography policy' ('yes')	5	3	3	1	5	17	55
'Senior policy' ('yes')	4			1	5	10	33

The results show that a good deal of work has been carried out already, but there is still much room for improvement. Furthermore, there are clear differences between the social partners in each country. Some had policy formulations already in place and others had barely begun the work. More than half of the social partners report that they have specific policy formulation concerning the demographic development of the labor force. However, only a third of them report having implemented a specific 'senior policy'. Finally, systematic changes were found between the Nordic countries (Table 4). In Norway all organizations and in Denmark most of them had both of these policies in place. In contrast, demographic change was addressed by only three out of a total of eight of the social partners both in Finland, and Sweden, and by one out of four in Iceland. Furthermore, none of the social partners in Finland and Sweden, and only one in Iceland had an explicit 'senior policy' in place.

■ LEARNING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Three questions in the questionnaire concerned about lifelong learning and career development. The findings are shown in Table 5. Overall, one in five of the social partners had explicitly addressed older workers in their lifelong learning (LLL) policy, while for almost 70% of them this was not the case (*"No, older workers have not been explicitly mentioned in our LLL policy"*). The remaining cases answered *"I do not know"*. As we can see from table 5, again there were also differences between the countries. Older workers were most often addressed in LLL policy in Denmark, while none of the social partners in Iceland and Sweden had done so.

TABLE 5.

Lifelong learning and career support explicitly for older workers (n)

		DK (n=6)	FI (n=8)	SE (n=8)	IS (n=4)	NO (n=5)	All * (N=31)	All* (%)
LLL policy includes a specific formulation for older workers' development opportunities	Yes	3	1			2	6	20
	No	2	6	5	4	3	20	76
Support to career extension	Yes	2	4	1		5	12	40
	No	2	4	4	4		14	47
Monitoring of implementation of LLL-strategies	Yes	2	2	1	1	2	8	27
	No	3	6	5	3	3	20	67

(* Answers "I do not know" are not included in the table. Hence, the percentages do not add up to 100%.

Even if to a lesser extent explicitly through lifelong learning, in 40% of the cases the social partners' policy included a specific formulation for support to extended careers for older workers. Still, also in this regards, most commonly (47%) the social partners did not have such policy formulations.

Central strategies in large organizations do not necessarily mean corresponding practice 'in live' in workplaces. Therefore, we also asked about monitoring the implementation of the LLL strategies. Barely one in three (27%) answered 'yes' to the question "Does your organisation regularly monitor the extent to which the LLL-strategies are implemented among your members?" (Table 5). Thus, the findings suggest that most of the social partners have no tools or measures in place to follow-up the implementation of their LLL-strategies in their member organizations and in workplaces. The monitoring was most common in Norway (2/3) and least common in Sweden (1/5).

■ ANTI-DISCRIMINATING LAW IN CONNECTION TO AGE

Anti-discrimination laws are in place in all the Nordic countries. We were interested in finding out to what extent are the social partners' policy formulations responsive to the law when it comes to age. Overall, one in three of them answered 'yes' to our question "Does your organisation policy explicitly address the anti-discrimination law in connection to age?". For more than half (60%) of the respondents this was not the case. The remaining ten percent of the respondents – all from Sweden and Iceland - reported simply that they do not know.

■ FROM FORMAL POLICIES TO PRACTICE

In line with the LLL monitoring issue, we had two more questions dealing with the communication between the central lead of the confederations and their member organizations, the latter being closer to the workplaces and everyday life of the individual union members. The findings are presented in Table 6. The question about communication was "To what extent, in your opinion, is the central level in your organisation informed and updated about what is happening on the local level/workplaces/shop floor?". A majority of the respondents (68%) reported that the central is informed and updated at least to some extent. The social partners in Denmark and Finland seemed to have the best situation in this regards, while it was less so in Norway and Sweden. All the three responses from Iceland were "to some extent" (one missing answer).

TABLE 6.

The extent of realization of policies into practice (n)

		DK (n=6)	FI (n=8)	SE (n=8)	IS (n=4)	NO (n=5)	ALL (N=31)	ALL (%)
Central level in the organisation informed and updated in regards to what happens on the local level	To high extent	3	3	1			7	23
	To some extent	2	3	3	3	3	14	45
	To a little extent		1	3		2	6	19
Policy becomes realized in practice	To high extent	2			n.a.	3	5	19
	To some extent	3	6	4		2	15	58
	To a little extent			1			1	4

In our final question on the policy – practice –dimension we asked the respondents to assess the effectiveness of these policies in practice: *“To what extent – in your opinion – does the policy become realized in practice?”* (the question was not included in the questionnaire in Iceland). Just about one in five of the social partners were very confident that policies become also implemented in practice (*“to a high extent”*). All of these social partners were from Denmark and Norway, while their colleagues in Finland and Sweden were clearly more cautious in their assessment (Table 6). In all, 77% of the respondents meant that their policies turn into practice at least to some extent.

■ SOCIAL PARTNERS’ COOPERATION WITH THE TRAINING SECTOR

Our final question dealt with the social partners’ engagement in training cooperation. The question was formulated as follows: *“To what extent is your organisation actively cooperating with the training sector/institutions to promote lifelong learning to all your members, also to older workers?”* The findings are presented in Table 7. Almost one in four of the respondents reported of cooperation to a high extent and most of them (70%) at least to some extent. The cooperation was most active in Denmark and Iceland where for a half of the organisations the cooperation was on a level *“to a high extent”*. A total of six organisations (19%), reported of no cooperation at all. Most of them were from Sweden, representing half of all the Swedish social partners who participated in the survey.

TABLE 7.

Active cooperating of social partners with the training institutions to promote lifelong learning to also older workers

	DK (N=6)	FI (N=8)	SE (N=8)	IS (N=4)	NO (N=5)	ALL (N=31)	ALL (%)
To high extent	3	2		2		7	23
To some extent	1	5	3	2	4	15	48
To a little extent	1	1				2	7
Not at all	1		4		1	6	19
I don’t know			1			1	3
All	6	8	8	4	5	31	100

COUNTRY “UPDATES” AND REFLECTIONS ON THE SURVEY IMPLEMENTATION

This paper has presented the results from a new Nordic survey carried out in the network *Older workers in the Nordic countries (OWN)*. The goal of the OWN-survey was to find out whether the social partners have developed policies and outlined strategies, which address the demographic change explicitly in regards their senior members and promote opportunities for lifelong learning and career development for them. The survey was carried out historically in a very interesting and “dynamic” time period. Soon after we had started the study, the latest and a major credit crunch had just hit the globe. The consequences were spreading fast and the Nordic countries were not immune to them either. In the Nordic countries, the consequences were the hardest for Iceland. In contrast, especially Norway but also Denmark seem to have been spared from major long-term setbacks in their labour markets. Still, older

workers were bound to get their share of these negative consequences. Taken that the OWN-survey was based on an earlier OWN-report, which presented the situation of older workers and LLL in the Nordic countries late in 2007 and early 2008, an update is due. In this chapter we will present a brief overview to the current situation in each country. The presentation for each country follows roughly a common structure: The first part will present the current “senior climate” in working life and major lines regarding the public policy and discussion. The second part highlights the current interests and major activities among social partners regarding older workers and LLL. Finally, we will share our experiences, which were gathered in each country with social partners while we were implementing the survey. These updates, we hope, will help to better understand the findings from the survey.

■ DENMARK - LEIF EMIL HANSEN

After reading this report, a representative from the State Employers’ organization ‘*Personalestyrelsen*’ in Denmark confirmed its findings for their country, but was also surprised for the great differences between the countries. According to her, in Denmark both the employers’ and employees’ organisations have a focus on the demographic development and they are fully aware of the importance of LLL, but there is still a need to continue paying attention to the issue.



For the moment the focus is on whether the Voluntary Early Retirement Pay should be abandoned or not.“

The Danish LO pointed out that they find the claim that social partners in this matter find themselves in “an especially difficult position” too pessimistic. They point out that on the contrary LO has had the situation of the older workers high on the agenda for years. Already years ago they established a welfare committee, aiming at solutions for a later retirement of older workers. They developed concrete senior policy tools and visited companies to inform about ‘good practice’ in senior

policies. An integrated element in this was the expansion of opportunities for job-careers for older workers⁷.

When it comes to the current interests and activity among the social partners regarding the topic of our survey, older workers and lifelong learning, in Denmark, there is not much going on; at least not much that is known to the general public. For the moment the focus is on whether the Voluntary Early Retirement Pay (“efterløn”) should be abandoned or not. The current recession has created much more unemployment than was the case just a couple of years ago – and the Voluntary Early Retirement Pay (“efterløn”) is being debated because of a possible lack of work force in 2020 – due to demographic developments – and because it is costly for the public finances.

This situation in Denmark was also reflected in our work when implementing this study. Various experiences and observations were made along with this process. Firstly, older workers issues seem to be primarily related to retirement age. This again is related to public finances and economic matters (will there be a lack of workforce in the future?). Not much is being debated in the light of expanding career and learning opportunities for older workers. Secondly, a contradiction is visible here: for instance, politicians (who are at the same time public employers) claim the need for older workers’ staying longer on the labour market while at the same time public companies first of all sack older workers when cutting down employment. And the fact remains that unemployed seniors face age discrimination when seeking for a new job. The situation seems to be rather schizophrenic!

■ FINLAND - ULPUKKA ISOPAHKALA-BOURET & SUSANNA PALONIEMI

Ageing of population is of great concern for Finnish policy makers. In Finland ageing of the work force takes place faster than in other industrial countries. The difference between educational level of younger workers (25-34 years) and older workers (55-64 years old) is bigger than in Sweden, Norway and Denmark (OECD Indicators 2010). However, the active participation in work of those who are 55 to 64 years old is still high, above the older workers’ employment goal in European Union, 50 % (Haataja 2006). The retirement age reform that was implemented in 2005 has already succeeded in extending the work careers of older workers (Eläketurvakeskus 2011). According to a recent survey, Finns have plans to retire even later in the future (YLE News, 7 Feb 2010).

In general, there is a strong focus on working life development in Finland. Several large governmental programmes have been implemented to that end. There have also been several studies in the 21st century regarding the ageing population at work, the extension of public spending due to the ageing population, and the retirement plans among the ageing workers. Alas, these studies and projects have not had any particularly goals regarding education or LLL specifically for older workers.



In general, there is a strong focus on working life development in Finland.”

The OWN-survey appeared to be very timely in Finland when it comes to the current interests and activity among the social partners regarding older workers and lifelong learning. At the time we started the survey, there was a national committee, including the social partners, working towards solutions to extend working life among older workers. At the moment, the issue of older workers seems to be primarily related to demographic change in general and retirement age in particular. Against the fact that Finland has a long history in focusing on older workers in policy and practice

⁷ See for instance Aldrich et al: Ældre på arbejdspladserne – 10 gode eksempler, COWI, 2004 - www2.seniorpolitik.no/admin/data/dokumenter/danskRapport_ver04Final.pdf

– indeed among the longest in Europe! – we can only hope that this time the next step would really be to formulate specific development-focused contents for senior policy and concrete measures to increase the opportunities for and participation in LLL of and for older workers.

Due to the political timing of the survey in Finland, our initiative originally raised a good deal of positive response among the social partners. The organizations were very interested in the potential new knowledge the survey would provide. They were effective in finding relevant persons amongst themselves to answer the OWN-survey and the answers were received quickly. However, towards the final stages of implementing our study, it appeared that the reflections on the findings of our survey were hard to get. This may be partly due to the fact that the Finnish representative in the OWL network changed during the process. However, partly this may be because for the time being the social partners are not involved in any activities relevant to older workers and LLL. The results of the committee aiming to new solutions for extended careers provided little concrete to take on with – indeed, were basically non-existent from the perspective of promoting LLL for older workers.

■ ICELAND - BERNHARÐUR GUÐMUNDSSON

At the end of our study Iceland looks rather different than in the beginning. Besides – and related to – the global credit crunch, the country has gone through its own economic crisis beyond proportion. As a consequence, the country is going through major changes, some of which also affect the employment situation of older workers. The latest EU Employment Observatory (2011) reports among others of increase in unemployment, both long- and short-term, and related changes in unemployment and other social benefits.



General reaction was that they enforced the understanding for more focus on the older workers.”

When it comes to the *current interests and activity* among the social partners regarding the topic of our survey, older workers and lifelong learning, some discussion is going on in Iceland. Partly this discussion has been inspired by the OWN-survey and its findings. In October 2010, a meeting was arranged in Reykjavik with representatives of the partners of Labour market, who participated in the OWN survey and the Icelandic representative in the OWN-network. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the OWN-findings in general and in Iceland in particular. Indeed, the comment from one of the representatives of the social partners was very positive: “*Dealing with the [OWN] questionnaire, both the necessary research work and forming an overview, was an educational experience.*” The main points of discussion in and conclusions from the meeting can be summarized as follows:

- *The Education and Training Service Centre* is owned by all parties concerned. The work is financed by the ministry of education, science and culture. The Centre is responsible for creating educational opportunities for workers with little formal education.
- Younger workers have been in focus at the cost of the older workers as they need more practical training and conscious efforts are made to get them to join the unions.
- The glorification of youth is a strong factor.
- Considering that older workers form almost one third of active workers, it is evident that they deserve more support and their needs be recognized.
- Many older workers, however, are not interested in Lifelong learning (LLL), as they have a negative attitude to school, based on their bitter experience as youth.
- Many of the workshops offered make older workers leave as losers as the workshops

are based on pedagogical principles convenient for the young workers. Those workshops should be planned on gerogogical premises, being run on a bit slower pace. The teachers should not be too young, but be old enough to carry credibility.

- It is well and good to pass laws and set policies concerning lifelong learning. However, the question is, who shall implement them and how will those be punished who don't? It is here that trade unions could play an important role. This applies also to laws on anti-discrimination.
- Examples of success are the most effective way in creating interest in education and training. This affects both workers and employers and motivates them for action.
- An idea-bank could be established on the social partners' homepages for this purpose. This could help both parties to appreciate the value of older workers for the companies and trigger their initiative to strengthen their valuable experience and loyalty. Tacit knowledge of workers must be made visible as it strengthens the firm and the self image of the workers.

General reaction to the survey and its findings was that they enforced the understanding for more focus on the older workers. They are a very valuable part of the workforce and should be treated on their own premises when it comes to learning opportunities. A conclusion was that all partners on the labour market must co-operate in getting this done as clearly, we are talking about a win – win situation!

■ NORWAY - JON SANDVIK & TARJA TIKKANEN

In many senses one could argue, at least in relative terms within the current European perspective, that at the moment Norway is a country with ideal circumstances for full-value acknowledgement of the contribution of older workers in workplaces: high-employment rates also among older workers regardless of the global credit crunch, governmental initiative to promote workplace interventions for inclusive working life, and good provision of opportunities for lifelong learning and job-related training, as well as high overall participation rates in these in society (Tikkanen, 2011).



Indeed, from 2006 up to late 2008 an increase in the expected retirement age by six months was registered.”

Employment rates are still high also among older workers. The economy has been relatively stable in international comparison. The hit by the global credit crunch was only moderate and the turn to recovery took place relatively fast and is ongoing. There are two large governmental initiatives, which are aiming at building an inclusive working life for all. Partly these have an explicit focus on older workers. The first of these, the three-partite agreement for a more inclusive working life, was renewed for the third time in 2010. Prolonging participation in working life is one of the main goals for this agreement. For four more years the social partners and the government are obliged to use resources on improving cooperation on central, regional and local/enterprise level to inspire and motivate older workers to continue working instead of choosing an early exit. Indeed, from 2006 up to late 2008 an increase in the expected retirement age by six months was registered. One possible explanation suggested here is that the lack of labour force during this period opened the eyes of the employers to see the value of older workers and their competence. However, through 2009 there was a minor setback on this indicator – probably due to the finance crisis. Enterprises had to slim down their workforce, and once again the possibility of using early pension schemes made getting rid of the oldest workers the easier way for the employers. A follow-up of this measure implementation has shown that on the enterprise level even strong relations between the social partners do not seem to influence the enterprises' efforts to retain older workers (Midtsundstad, 2011).

As the second measure, the public pension system of Norway was profoundly reformed effective from 01.01.2011. One of the main goals of this reform is to make it more attractive to continue working after the age of 62 years. It is now opened for flexible retirement and pension age (from 62 years) and the new regime allows full time participation in work with full salary along with full payment from the public pension system. It is, of course, too early to measure any results yet, but this reform is likely to make substantial changes in the retirement pattern in the country.

What can be said about the current interests and activity among the social partners regarding the topic of our survey, older workers and lifelong learning, in Norway? As the “owners” of the three-partite agreement on a more inclusive working life (IA), the social partners take a great deal of responsibility in implementing the thoughts and policies needed to achieve the goals for the initiative. They run a lot of internal courses and programs on the issue. However, the main focus is on reducing sick-leave and not on the participation of older workers. While lifelong learning is being solidified by more attention to continuing education and training - and the social partners are strongly involved in this work - as a strategy for increasing retirement age it is not given much attention in the recent discourse.

When this survey was implemented, we experienced a good deal of interest towards its thematic by the social partners. Most of them answered to the survey promptly and as expected. However, even if interest in the topic and the OWN-work was not lacking, the two largest social partners in the country, Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) and the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO), did not answer to the survey – regardless of the fact that they were offered an extra possibility to do so. While reasons for this may be many and understandable, for our study it naturally was a disappointment.

■ SWEDEN - HANNE RANDLE

In Sweden, the government has announced that it envisages the possibility of rising the age, which people have a right to remain in work, from 67 to 69 years. The purpose is to increase the labour supply of older workers and delay the average age of exit from the labour market⁸ (EU Employment Observatory, 2011). This initiative has been questioned by the Trade Union Confederation (LO) as their own research show that too many of their members cannot choose to continue their working life due to fatigue or ill health (LO 2011). Nevertheless, official statistics support that more people in Sweden choose to carry on working even after the age of 65 years (SCB 2010a). Even though there is a significant gender difference, men are more likely to continue their work careers than women. However, compared to men, women are more likely to take part in employer provided training and competence development, even late in their careers (SCB 2010b). The government assumes that their initiative to introduce tax exemptions for people who choose to prolong their working life after the age of 65 years, have played some role in increasing the numbers of older workers. The improved health situation in the older population is also playing an important role, as it creates better conditions for active ageing and a prolonged working life.



...men are more likely to continue their work careers than women.“

The Equality Ombudsman (DO) is to develop and monitor the use of active measures to combat discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age. The active measures are expected to be used as tools by employers and trade unions in their efforts to combat discrimination on the labour market, and ultimately lead to an enlargement of the labour force (DO 2010). There are plenty of cases proving that even though the government wishes their citizens to work longer, employers are not sharing the same enthusiasm in practice for employing older workers. So far the strengthened anti-discrimination law has resulted in more complaints filed by older workers. At present it is the second largest ground for discrimination in



working life (DO 2011). Nevertheless, the government initiatives are basically focused on creating financial incentives for a prolonged working life, and, therefore, they have no measures relating active ageing to the development of a skilled work force, lifelong learning or developmental opportunities. The issue is rather about preventing people from early retirement on the basis of financial gain. There are no national initiatives aimed at developing good practice in regards active ageing.

When it comes to the current interests and activity among the social partners regarding the topic of our survey, older workers and lifelong learning, there are no active measures in Sweden besides combating discrimination in working life. The latter specifically aim to develop better conditions for older workers so they can sustain an active working life, based on career extension or personal development. This does not, however, mean that the social partners have no interests in pursuing these issues; it is more about their policies being generally inclusive: older workers are not a specific target group. This may change in the future, on the basis of the trade unions' own knowledge about their members' working situation and working conditions and the employers' increasing awareness of the foreseen shortage of a skilled workforce.

This situation in Sweden was clearly reflected in our work when implementing the OWN study. Firstly, the trade unions need to appoint resources for developing policies in the areas of older workers and lifelong learning. A starting point should be their knowledge about their members' situation at work. These resources need to be targeted for the specific purpose to develop better conditions for older workers in working life. This requires a new way of thinking from the trade unions, as their tradition rather has been to negotiate early exit deals for their members. Secondly, the employer's organizations need to target resources in order to support employers in their work to develop better conditions for active ageing at the work place level. At the moment the employer's organization have knowledge of the situation of why and how people can work longer, often due to their own research, but this knowledge has not become manifested as active measures. While the employers' associations provide support and advice, it is up to the single employer to decide what measures they wish to implement. Indeed, instead of such a passive support, the employers' association could take a much more active role to contribute to developing better conditions for older workers and active ageing at the work place level, should they wish to do so. Single companies do not have access to this kind of knowledge or the tools. A third reflection is that, the results from the OWN-survey suggest some ambivalence in regards responsibility-taking. The question seems to be who should lead the work to develop better conditions for an aging workforce? Is it the social partners at the level of the confederation? Or should the social partners do this work at the level of the unions and employers? Or is it up to the single employer and work place?

The public debate in issues related to the ageing work force is mainly focusing on health ("ill-being") and problematic working conditions. On contrast, public debate seems lacking when it comes to knowledge, skills and experience as paving way to new opportunities for a prolonged working life. Indeed, developing of or maintaining the skills of older workers for improved employability, is not an issue in Sweden. Instead all issues are related to working conditions and work environment, and based in the assumption that health is the major issue which decides an older workers propensity to continue working. The latter is the case regardless the research that has shown that older workers are prepared to leave the workforce because of boring jobs and that employees are motivated to work longer simply because they enjoy work (Randle 2011). The idea of changing people's mindsets about active ageing seems to be an uphill struggle.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

The study was carried out in a situation where the Nordic countries show well above the European average participation rates in lifelong learning and in most cases also in the activity rates in the labour markets for also the seniors. Yet, also in these countries participation rates in LLL are clearly lower among the older employees compared to their younger counterparts. In case of the workers in and beyond their 50s, in particular in non-managerial positions, a mentality according to which they hope to be able to keep their jobs until to be able to retire with

dignity, is much more common than that they would consider flexible learning and career development opportunities in line with younger workers. And this regardless of the fact that we are talking about an age group, which potentially has another

15-20 years to go in working life! This situation may be related to factors at work – working life and workplaces, as well as job tasks and job tools – and/or to the availability of learning and training opportunities suitable for their needs. Nevertheless, the mindsets of the senior employees' themselves and/or their employers' seem more easily to turn to tuning down prolonged careers (preferring various exit-related alternatives) than to finding opportunities for learning and development. This may be particularly so in times when the existing and/or expected career path is challenged, a situation to which the older workers are not immune either. In the OWN-survey we were interested in finding out how the social partners are doing their part in this situation/discourse and addressing these opportunities in regards their most loyal members.

The findings showed that targeted LLL and career development policy measures regarding the older workers showed to be in place in Denmark and to some extent in Norway, while this seemed to be least the situation in Sweden. Finland and Iceland have been prioritizing more general policies within which no particular group is specifically targeted to. Several of the social partners pointed out that good organizational, personnel and competence policy is good for everybody, regardless of their age, hence no need for targeted measures. In principle, such an approach should provide equal opportunities also for older workers, but that work would not

show in a survey like this one. While the general and strong equal opportunities and -policies, at least in principle, are also in force in Sweden, the low or non-existing attention to older workers' situation by the social partners,

The mindsets of the senior employees' themselves and/or their employers' seem more easily to turn to tuning down prolonged careers than to finding opportunities for learning and development.

suggests that for the time being the country's approach to older workers may be somewhat different from the other Nordic countries. However, here we find some similarities to the situation in Iceland, in which the social partners seem only to have been awakened to see the senior employees as a result of the OWN-study. These two countries already have the highest employment and activity rates for older workers and in Iceland also the LLL rates are rather high, highest after Denmark.

Overall the findings suggest that targeted measures to senior employees provide stronger, and in many cases much needed, support to LLL and career development for older workers than the all-inclusive, integrated policies. Targeted lifelong learning policy can be related to higher learning participation rates, as in Denmark, than in countries with only general, age-integrative

policies. However, as the case of Norway show, targeted policies do not necessarily alone “guarantee” high learning participation rates among seniors. Indeed, the LLL rates in Norway are the lowest of all countries, yet the employment rates in this age group are high. On another note, also age-integrative LLL-policies can provide a supportive basis for career development, as suggested by the high employment rates in Iceland – but not in Finland - provided that other relevant areas of policies and practice are aligned with/supportive to these.

The general attitude towards the OWN-survey was positive. However, we observed a good deal of variation in getting the answers to our survey both across the countries and between the organizations within most countries. Getting the answers was relatively easy and straightforward from Finland and Iceland, as well as from some organizations in, Norway & Denmark. Notable difficulties were faced in Sweden. In Norway the largest two organizations (LO and NHO) did not answer at all, regardless that they showed interests to the survey and its initial findings, and were given an extended opportunity to send in their answers. The survey does not allow us to be certain of the reasons for this variety and the observed difficulties. However, the following factors have likely played a role here:

- **POLITICAL REASONS.**

The survey raised some questions, which may have been uncomfortable or controversial for the unions. This is suggested by our experiences from Norway and Denmark.

- **TIMING.**

In Norway the survey came out at the same time as the final phase of the discussion about the new pension reform, which was unfortunate. In Finland our timing was fortunate, as the social partners were in an active process for finding new ways for prolonging the working careers and postponing the retirement age at the aftermath of the pension reform.

- **PERSONS CONTACTED.**

As we were interested in policy measures, we aimed at talking to representatives as high on the top as possible. These persons may have been too busy to answer to the survey, failing to delegate the answering responsibility, or otherwise not the right persons.

- **CONCEPTUAL DIFFERENCES REGARDING “SENIOR POLICY”.**

For example that in Finland and Sweden no organization reported of having a specific “senior policy” in place, may not necessarily mean that in these countries the social partners would not be concerned for these issues relative to their older members. Within the general, age-integrated and inclusive approach these policies may just have been named differently. Within the latter, senior workers would not have been separated from the rest of the workforce, and therefore answering to the survey may have been experienced as difficult.

- **OVER-GENERALIZATION BY AGE?**

A critical point in the OWN-survey may have been that we requested about the social partners’ approach simply regarding senior employees as a one group. IT may have been easier to answer if we had separating for example the younger and older seniors (e.g. those aged 45- 54 years and 55-64 years).



It is suggested that the changes in the unemployment insurance system (in Ghent countries – discussed in the beginning of this paper) would result to a dramatic drop in the union membership in Denmark, Finland and Sweden from around 80% of the labour force to 50-60% (Lind, 2007). It is difficult to foresee what might the consequences be when it comes to the social partners' approach to their seniors, in particular regarding their needs for learning and career development. At the current situation, however, we wish to emphasize the *great potential* that the social partners have regarding this “marginal” group of lifelong learners. We do this regardless that the country updates for the situation in early 2010 show low commitment and concern by many social partners for encouragement and support to LLL and career development among older workers.

We recommend, firstly, that the social partners take a more active approach, in policy and practice, to promote development opportunities for their senior members. The social partners can do a lot alone, and even more in cooperation with other relevant actors, particularly with the education and training providers at all levels.

Secondly, social partners should play an active role – indeed, a leading role if needed - in building of targeted measures to their senior members for the development of their job-related knowledge, skills and attitudes. There is some evidence suggesting that a general approach may not be responsive to the needs (or strengths) of senior employees. To some extent the views of the older workers themselves are divided when it comes to these preferences (general vs. targeted approach). The equal treatment principle should work, considering all other factors equal throughout the staff in workplaces. However, in reality this is seldom, if ever, the case. It may also be that the employers/management is not promoting the range of development options available for older workers, as they do for younger workers. On the other hand, the older workers may not be seeking to utilize these options as actively as their younger colleagues. The reasons for this may be various. Many seniors still have both lower education levels than their younger counterparts and obsolete learning and study skills, as well as sometimes, as a consequence, rather training-averse attitudes. Besides more age-friendly workplaces (OECD 2006; Tikkanen & Nyhan, 2006b), all of these issues need to be addressed, in order us to be best possibly prepared to meet the historically new demographic reality and build a sustainable society.

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APPENDIX

■ A LIST OF THE CONFEDERATIONS INCLUDED IN THE SURVEY

DENMARK

Confederation of Danish Employers (DA)
www.da.dk

The Danish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO)
www.lo.dk

Confederation of Professionals in Denmark (FTF)
www.ftf.dk

Local Government Denmark (KL) www.kl.dk

The Danish Confederation of Professional Associations (AC) www.ac.dk

State Employer's Authority www.perst.dk

FINLAND

Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK)
www.sak.fi

Finnish Confederation of Professionals (Salaried Employees) (STTK) www.sttk.fi

Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland (Academics) (AKAVA)
www.akava.fi

The Trade Union for the Public and Welfare Sectors (JHL) www.jhl.fi

Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK) www.ek.fi

Commission for Local Authority Employers (KT)
www.kuntatyonantajat.fi

ICELAND

The Federation of Icelandic Industries (SI) www.si.is

Icelandic Confederation of Labour (ASI) www.asi.is

Federation of State and Municipal Employees of Iceland (BSRB) www.bsrb.is

Confederation of Icelandic Employers (SA)
www.sa.is

NORWAY

Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) (*
www.nho.no

Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) (*
www.lo.no

The Federation of Norwegian Commercial and Service Enterprises (HSH) www.hsh-org.no

Spekter Arbeidsgiverforening www.spekter.no

The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) www.ks.no

The Confederation of Vocational Unions (YS)
www.ys.no

The Confederation of Unions for Professionals, Norway (Unio) www.unio.no

(* This organization did not respond to the OWN-survey.

SWEDEN

The Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees (TCO) www.tco.se

The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO)
www.lo.se

The Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations (SACO) www.saco.se

Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL) www.skl.se

Confederation of Swedish Enterprise (SN)
www.svensktnaringsliv.se

Nordiskt Nätverk för Vuxnas Lärande

www.nordvux.net

nvl

Nordiskt nätverk för vuxnas lärande



norden

Nordic Council of Ministers