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**TITTEL PÅ MASTEROPPGAVE: LABOUR MIGRATION: LANGUAGE
PROBLEMS AND OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY**

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Preface

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me while writing this thesis,

For my son and my parents for ... just being here with me.

Some abbreviations and explanations

Arbeidstilsynet – (Norwegian) Work Inspection Authority,

FAFO – (Forskingsstiftelsen Fafo) Institute for Labour and Social

Dumping,

IMDI – (Integrerings- og mangfoldsdirektoratet) Directorate of Integration

and Diversity,

IOM – International Organization for Migration

SSB – (Statistisk sentralbyrå) Statistics Norway,

SUA – (Servicesenteret for utenlandske arbeidstakere) Service Center for Foreign Workers

UDI – (Utlendingsdirektoratet) Directorate of Integration and Diversity

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Summary

Citizens of Central and Eastern Europe, very often called 'cheap labor force', turned out to be a gift for a quickly developing Norwegian economy in recent years. That is why immigration from those countries was the largest. The problem of communication and languages came together with migrants. New immigrants mostly do not know Norwegian or English language. Men were mostly engaged in the construction sector and women in the cleaning sector. In those sectors relevant education was not required. Therefore, the problem turned out later: many of them do not have any language knowledge or knowledge of basic rules of safety and routines at the workplace. Communication at work turned out to be mainly based on gestures and body language.

Before the thesis was finally drafted the author read in one of the newspapers about another accident at one of the construction sites in Stavanger. This time the event ended tragically because the worker died. The worker came to Norway, very shortly before his death. He was employed by employment agencies and worked as a construction builder. He didn't understand that it was forbidden to pass some areas at the construction sites as these were not secured. Did he receive any instructions training about safety rules in his own language? The answer to this question is unknown.

This ensured the author of this paper that the choice of the subject was right.

The author decided to focus on some aspects while working on the design of the thesis. In the first part author decided to focus on general issues and the lay-out. Here the author of the research thesis will try to define the research problem. The author also provides an overview of comparative statistics between the Baltic States, Poland and Norway. In this part especially interesting position is comparing power parity between Norway and Poland. The author will also present an overview of the literature and the lay-out of thesis.

The next step will be identification of the field of the research. The theoretical overview will help us to answer for questions: what is exactly health and safety? What kind of relation is there between lack of communication and dangers in health and safety regulations? Here, as well, I will try to describe the actual status of migration phenomena based on specific statistical data. This will help to identify

and generally understand the group of our research (interviewee) before I focus on the concrete group. That means that before I make a test, I would like to know as much as possible about the test objects.

Then the research methodology will be presented. The main question was defined here: to use a survey or an interview. On the one hand, the author had to examine a group of employees on the other employers. There is also the third actor: employees of the public institutions and other organizations. The author decided to choose interview to conduct research among workers, employers and workers of public offices like e.g. SUA. These interviews tended to be more loose and open in order to supplement some information. Also these talks were to confirm, disprove or confront the information collected from employees.

Probably the most interesting chapter will be the one which will show the results of the research. This chapter will present the concrete action of the Norwegian authorities in order to promote the rules and regulations in Norway. According to author's investigations the efforts of the authorities are surprisingly extensive. The author will try to describe what kind of help workers could get from public organizations. It should be emphasized that the Norwegian policy is not neutral with respect to the growth of new economic emigration and / or family emigration. As it turns out, they will be very different. The results from statistics and theory will be also presented.

The work finishes with the discussion, which is a kind of a summary of all theories, statistics, results of surveys and interviews. The author made also some own comments about the general situations. While writing this paper author made some own observations. The finally conclusions were based on three grounds: literature, statistics and own observations based on author's research.

The main conclusion will be that the problem with not knowing the language exists among the foreign workers in Norway. On the positive side, one needs to admit that many state agencies, non- governmental organizations and also employers seem to be aware of the difficulties they are facing.

1. Introduction

1.1. Labor migration vs. language skills.

Since 1st of May 2004 European Union became larger by ten new members states – 8 from the so called East Europe (Czech Rep., Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia) and Malta with Cyprus. That increased a huge labor migration from Eastern European countries to West Europe – mostly to the United Kingdom, Ireland and Norway. Only in 2007 one of five workers was from Eastern European countries (mostly from Poland and Lithuania). As an example it can be mentioned that United Kingdom after 2004 expected around 10.000 workers from Poland countries to arrive. There came more than 600 000 Polish workers (H.M. Kriznik, 2007, p. 5). According to the FAFO reports the average Eastern European worker was a man of 39 years, who spent only a short period of time in Norway and didn't have any language skills (except his mother tongue and sometimes Russian). The two problems were faced: the language issue and different safety cultures. Most likely most of the workers had a HSE courses but the question if they understood and routines they were practicing were valid? This paper will concentrate on problems with communication in HSE routines and, as it was mentioned, problems with different safety cultures. The main issue of this paper will be how the state, employers, labor organizations and others faced the language issue due to HSE regulations among the Eastern European workers.

1.2. Defining the research problem

As it will be mentioned in another chapter of the thesis, communication is a process of transmission of such information between the sender and receiver. But for the message to be understood by both sender and receiver they must share a common code. When there is not any common code then the message would be not understood or misunderstood. The simplest example of this is the conversation between two people, when each of them uses a different language. Communication sent by the sender will absolutely not be understood by the recipient. The problem is

the language barrier. In the case of safety rules it is essential that the message such as an evacuation alarm should be understood by the recipient. Lack of understanding of communication can lead to dangerous situations.

The most important for this paper are three problems: language difficulties and different safety culture. The main one will be how the state, labor organizations and employers help to face those problems. The authors of the FAFO report from 2007 claimed that the language difficulties had not caused any serious consequences such as accidents. More serious problem seemed to be the understanding of safety. The authors claimed again that main problems here are:

- productivity which is more important than safety,
- people from Eastern-Europe are not familiar with safety representatives and the study

reveals several factors related to the use of foreign labor that may serve to undermine this institution (Alsos, Odegård, 2007, p.11-13).

The main problem of research work will answer the question:

How the state, employers, labour organizations and others faced the language issue due to HSE regulations among the Eastern European workers?

In addition, of course, other problems and questions will be considered like: the level of knowledge about safety rules in Norway among Eastern European workers and how it is related to Norwegian language skills, if those workers experienced any problems associated with the lack of knowledge, degree of help contributed from employers or state agencies and the way of behaviors of workers in emergency situations.

For those questions the author will try to answer in all parts of the research: pre-research, research and discussion.

1.3. Reasons for choosing the subject

According to the International Organization for Migration, Polish construction workers comprise the largest group of labor migrants in Norway. The employers have expressed the need for better information for labor migrants. There is currently a lack of overview of the system: the laws and regulations are complicated, often very different from those in country of origin. The lack of Norwegian language skills among the Polish labour migrants often contributes to misunderstanding and misinformation. This makes it difficult for the labor migrants to follow Norwegian laws and regulations and ensure that their rights as employees are not violated (IOM, 2010, p. 2).

"Many Polish workers complained about a total lack of information. The reason was the lack of any knowledge, namely not only Norwegian but also English, which in Norway is in widespread use. Our project in 2009 included two towns: Bergen and Oslo. In 2010, the beginning of August we are planning the training in the field of taxation, employment law, health and safety and the situation of women in the labor market in Stavanger. We also organize Norwegian courses for Polish workers. For the project we selected 30 people. The project is to provide information to this specific group with hope that those information will be spread out to others".

International Organization for Migration, Oslo, 12 May 2010

As I will mention in this paper, lack of knowledge of Norwegian language among migrants from Central and Eastern Europe will be a significant problem. This applies both to daily life but also (which is important for this thesis) safety at work. The main problems faced within the migration from new EU-members (mainly Poland):

- Minimum wage
- High degree of unionization
- Language difficulties
- Different safety culture
- The feeling of being discriminated
- Obligation to supervise
- Work not relevant to education/skills
- Not enjoying time in Norway

- Black work

- Social dumping

(FAFO, 2007, p. 11)

The same FAFO rapport shows that only 2% per cent of Eastern European employees can speak, read or just understand Norwegian or any other Scandinavian language, 27% can understand English and 38% claimed that they can understand other language (mostly German and Russian) while 41% answered that they did not speak any other than their native language. Even though the authors of the rapport agree that many who claimed to have English skills in fact knew that language only on a very a basic level (ii, p.81)

The language problem is a reason of not understanding safety rules and sending forward wrong information. That is certainly risk for workers themselves and for co-workers. The solutions of many enterprises were more likely scandalized: using "finger-language". The rapport quote one of the leaders of the off-shore project who said "If we don't have common language, we communicate by using hand and feet" (FAFO, 2007, p.82). There are many situations especially in the building industry where the understanding and communication is the main issue. The problem of not understanding the rules has consequences. As the statistics show, the percentage of accidents at work among groups of Polish workers has raised almost twice as much. Statistics Norway (Statistisk Sentralbyrå) and The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) have notified that have three times more chances to go into accident at work then their Norwegians colleagues. (Alsos, Odegård, 2007, p.83)

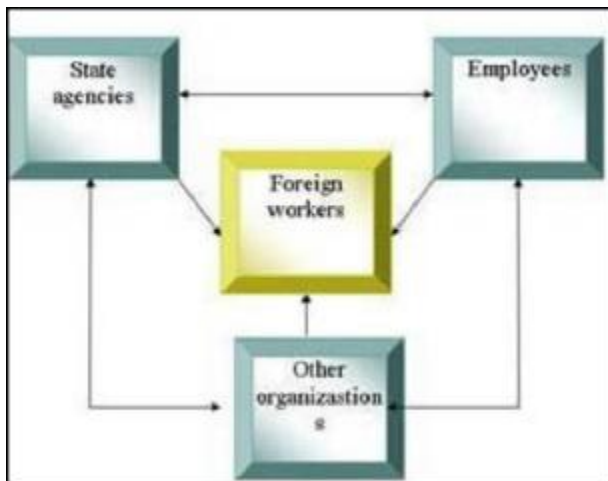
Table 1: Reported accidents at work by nationality in total (Polakker oftere i arbeidsulykker; www.absentia.no – last visit 12.05.2010)

	2006	2005
Norway	21913	-7%
Sverige	160	+6%
Polen	83	+77%
Danmark	50	-4%
Tyskland	47	+18%
UK	28	+12%
Finland	25	-44%

As it is shown in the accompanying table, the rate of accidents among the Poles increased significantly between 2005 and 2006. As noted by the author of the study, data are certainly minimized. Poles are afraid to report accidents and violations of labor law by employers simply because they are afraid to lose the job (Polakker oftere i arbeidsulykker; www.absentia.no – last visit 12.05.2010).

Understandably, the above mentioned increase of the migration from Poland and other Baltic countries demands that public institutions, employers and other organizations become involved. Language barriers are visible obstacles to communication, understanding HSE regulations and dealing with illegal work to mention just a few. Employers should be obliged to offer HSE courses in the languages that are understandable for the employees. When it comes to public institutions, they should perform informative and controlling functions. This dissertation focuses on problems of migrants in terms of communication and also on the way of communicating HSE regulations to them. It will also attempt to explore the quality of the understanding of these regulations.

Figure 1: The flow of information between the actors (based on personal research)



The flow of information that is being researched relates to the transfer of information between state agencies, employers and non-governmental agencies; all three of these channels focus on successful communication between one another (e.g. cooperation) and also between them and employees. The employees are the goal of their activities and are thus in the focus of interest of this research.

1.4 Layout

This paper can be described as a research. Therefore the author tried to make research component as a dominant one in the structure of the work. The thesis is presented in six chapters. The first one is the introduction to the paper which provides a brief definition of the problem and reasons for choosing the subject of research. The second chapter will focus on the general presentation of the theory of communication, safety and language aspects in relation to health and safety regulations. The third chapter will present the methodology used by the author. The fourth chapter will present findings from literature: the phenomenon of labor migration in Norway. The source of information was statistical, qualitative and quantitative. The same chapter will present activities of public institutions in order to promote knowledge of the basic principles of safety and health among migrants. The same chapter will present results of studies conducted by the author. The entire conclusion / discussion will be given in the end of the paper. Examples of questions (questionnaires) in English, Lithuanian, Polish and Russian can be found in the end of the paper. They were attached as appendixes.

1.5 The languages of the thesis

The research was "multilingual". Most of the literature was in English and Norwegian.

In case of the author's own research, that was conducting interviews; the author had to use other languages in addition. These languages were: Polish, Lithuanian and Russian.

The thesis itself is written in English.

1.6 Short characteristics of Poland and the Baltic Republics

For a better understanding it is important to present a short comparative characteristic of Poland, the Baltic countries and Norway. Of course, these figures do not answer to the question why people emigrate from this part of Europe to Norway. But it will give us for sure a general impression about the general economical indicators of each of those countries.

Poland and the Baltic Republics (Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia) are four countries in central-east Europe. The Baltic Republics after the Second World War became part of the Soviet Union. Poland became independent in 1945 but afterwards was dominated by the Soviet regime until 1989 when Poland became independent. So did the Baltic Republics shortly (Lithuania in 1990, Latvia and Estonia in 1991). After that the Baltic Republics became the three countries in Europe with the highest economical growth and very impressive economical development. During the financial crisis Latvia and Lithuania were EU members, which affected the negative effects of the crisis. Poland, after general reforms, became one of the fastest growing economies and in 2009 has not entered the global crisis. This does, however, not mean that Poland does not struggle with socio-economical problems like e.g. high debt or quite high unemployment. All of the mentioned countries have been a member of United Europe since 2004. One of the results was high migration from those countries to other members of EEA – especially to United Kingdom, Ireland, Iceland and Norway.

Table 1: Some of the economical data on Poland, Baltic Rep. and Norway (source CIA world fact book)

	Poland	Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania	Norway
Population (millions) (est.2010)	38,5	1,3	2,2	3,5	4,7
GDP (PPP)in billion \$ (2009)	690,1	24,36	32,4	54,84	271,1
GDP (official exchange rate) in\$	427,9	18,26	24,48	36,39	373,3
GDP per capita in \$ (PPP) (2009)	17 900	18 700	14 500	15 400	58 600
GDP growthrate in % (2007)	6,8	7,2	10,0	9,8	5,5
GDP growthrate in % (2008)	5,0	minus 3,6%	minus 4,6	2,8	2,1
GDP growthrate in % (2009)	1,7	minus 14,1	minus 17,8	minus 15,0	minus 1,0
Unemployment rate in % (est 2010)	8,9	13,8	17,1	13,7	3,2

Table 2: Average gross income in Norway and in Poland, based on PPP /source: FAFO, 2007, p. 24/

	1998	1999	2001	2004	2005
Average for all sectors without farming, fishing and private household with employees					
Poland	7 628	10 088	11 533	11 992	10463
Norway	25 588	26 394	28475	30 531	30 957
Building and construction					
Poland	7 676	9 899	10 495	10 785	8 870
Norway	24 088	24 887	26 482	28 164	28 661
Health and social services					
Poland	5 951	7 551	8 611	9358	8 259
Norway	21 834	22 469	23 779	25 947	26 425

The data from table 1 might not be relevant for everyday life's quality in all the mentioned countries. FAFO report from 2007 shows us the comparative characteristics based on PPP (Purchasing power parity). The issue here is not how much average citizen of the country can earn, but how much he could buy for that. The average income in Norway is of course higher than in Poland and the Baltic States. In the same way, goods in Poland and the Baltic Countries are much cheaper than in Norway. While comparing PPP indicators we could also see that the average gross income in Norway was in 2005 three times higher than the average one in Poland. That means that an average polish worker in Norway could buy much more goods than in Poland for the same salary.

During the comparative characteristics I also need to select the language issue. In Norway and other Western European countries, English is treated as a universal language and is compulsory from primary school. The situation in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe is much different. Until the early 90s Russian was a compulsory language in all East-Europeans countries. Also the difference between the limit of language Slavic languages (Polish, Russian) and the Germanic, Baltic languages (Latvian, Lithuanian) and the Germanic and Finnish languages (Estonian) and Germanic is significant. There is an issue of four different language families.

2. Theory

It seems necessary that the research work is preceded by a theoretical introduction. In this section the author focuses on a brief review of the theory of communication and safety regulations. This chapter will seek to provide an overview of the theoretical aspects. In contrast to the research section will contain a significant proportion of those cited.

According to Blaike Norman in the context of research design, a theory is an answer to a "why" question. It is an explanation of a pattern or regularity that has been observed, the cause or reason for which needs to be understood. (Blaike, Norman, 2005, p.141). The other quotation explains theory as a scheme or system of ideas or statements held as an explanation or account of a group of facts or phenomena ... a statement of what are held to be general laws, principles, or causes

of something known or observed (ii, p.141).

In this research the theory will be also the starting point for the conclusions of study. After the general problems and issues will be presented, than the research will be shown. The aim is to compare theory with the author's observations.

2.1. Health, Safety and Environment – theory

When we are mentioning the word safety probably we mean many aspects by that. One can say: I feel safe when there is no possibility that anything or anyone could harm me. We want us and our families to feel safe and protected. At the same time, employers want their workers to be protected from danger and any hazards. The word “safe” could be described as protected from any danger or harm, to do something what not likely leads to any physical harm or danger or to take any action which does not involve any risk (S. Wehmeier, 2010, s. 1339). The safety regulations as any other major regulation in the modern state should be established by authority of the state. In modern nation-states we are used to seeing the state as the main rule-making body for a great many people. State legislators possess considerable hierarchical authority: they are regarded as having the right to regulate certain matters within national borders. In addition, they and public bodies subsumed under them have access to sanctions of various kinds, which means that people have a further incentive to follow their directions (Brunsson, Jacobsson, 2005). As the regulation we could understand an identifiable and discrete mode of governmental activity yet the term regulation has been defined in a number of ways. Selznick’s notion of regulation as sustained and focused control exercised by a public agency over activities that we are valued by a community has been referred to as expressing a central meaning (Baldwin R., Cave M., 1999).

Health and safety issues in this case created by the organizational framework (internal control), arena issues (systematic development work) and network of rational actors (partners in the world work environment). This represents a social structure and ensures and models of operation are repeated over time, these models also determine and perceive safety as a social model (J.E.Karlsen: 2009, p. 4).

At this point I would also mention about SHE-culture. U. Kjellen defines SHE culture in three aspects: traditional 'occupational safety management', 'Risk management' and 'Systemic safety management'. The first one is defined as culture where the causes of errors and accidents are attributed to inattention and carelessness on behalf of the workers. Disciplinary measures will dominate the remedial actions. The second variant is the culture where engineering view of human error causation is dominant. Errors and accidents are analyzed in terms of mismatches between the operator and his environment. Systemic safety management culture, where the causes of errors are analyzed in relation to the total work context. (U. Kjellen, 2000, p.49-50)

In this case we might ask: why to regulate? Is regulation of safety really necessary? Why do we need all the procedures, laws, routines and regulation?

B. Kirwan is writing that accidents are costly, in terms of lost production and destruction of assets. Moreover the damage claims brought by injured parties under the ordinary law of torts or equivalent claims regulations in other systems, provided that they are fair and effective, can provide a strong economic incentive to minimize the risk of harm to individuals. Enlightened self-interest, even in the absence of any specific safety legislation, should therefore serve to minimize risk (B.Kirwa, 2002, p.3). In the other article the same author together with Hale and Hopkins claim that regulation is fundamentally intended to prevent harm coming to the public (including the workforce) and the environment. Without that more accidents will happen and more frequently. (B. Kirwa, A. Hale and A. Hopkins, 2002, p. 255).

The actors in this area are:

- employees (they should be protected),
- employers (they should protect),
- and state (legal basis and control).

The Nordic tradition was based on three pillars involving employers, employees and the government. Although it was founded on centralized agreements about uniform standards of employment conditions, it was open to local adjustments and actions. Job security and optimal working environment were the cornerstones of the model (Karlsen, Lindoe, 2006).

2.2 Safety culture and human errors

Uttal's (1983) definition of safety culture captures of its most essentials: shared values (what is important) and beliefs (how things work) that interact with an organization's structure and control systems to produce behavioral norms (the way we do things here). (Reason, 1998, p.294). On the other hand Reason calls the culture as the 'engine' that drives the systems towards the goal of sustaining the maximum resistance towards its operational hazards, regardless of the leadership's personality or current commercial concerns (ii, p. 294). Generally the culture could be a group of some issues like: structure, common values, control and common goals).

Reason refers to two kinds of accidents: individual accidents are organizational accidents (ii, p. 295). Reason to present accidents created model of human error causation where he concentrated on issue how humans and organizations commit errors. Here the defenses as cheese slices are shown as intervening between the local hazards and potential losses and each of slices represents one layer of defense. Each layer has a hole or gaps. The gaps are made by active failures (ii, p. 296). Due to the Swedish MTO line of thinking the model promotes a view of accidents as due to a combination of human, technological and organizational factors, related to performance variability (EEC, Note 13/06).

Due to Schein (1985) we could say that culture is a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered or developed by a group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration (Reason, 1998, p. 298).

Due to the Swiss Model it is showed that errors should happened but the errors could be prevented by proper training, information and supervision. The holes in the cheese which represents could be prevented while causes are understood. According to the authors of "Revisiting the Swiss cheese" to prevent accidents there is therefore a need to be able to describe the characteristics performance variability of a system, how such coincidences may build up and how they can be detected (Safbuild, 13-06).

2.3 Legal basis

Legal basis in this aspect refers to Act relating to working environment, working hours and employment protection, etc. (Working Environment Act/ Arbeidslivets lover/ as subsequently amended, last by Act of 23 February 2007 No. 10). In Section 3-2 (Special safety precautions) is clearly specified that in order to maintain safety at the workplace, the employer shall ensure:

- a) That employees are informed of accident risks and health hazards that may be connected with the work, and that they receive the necessary training, practice and instruction,
- b) That employees charged with directing or supervising other employees have the necessary competence to ensure that the work is performed in a proper manner with regard to health and safety,
- c) Expert assistance, when this is necessary in order to implement the requirements of this Act.

(2) When satisfactory precautions to protect life and health cannot be achieved by other means, the employer shall ensure that satisfactory personal protective equipment is made available to the employees, that the employees are trained in the use of such equipment and that the equipment is used.

(3) If work is to be carried out that may involve particular hazards to life or health, written instructions shall be prepared prescribing how the work is to be done and what safety measures are to be implemented.

(Working Environment Act; Working Environment Act/ Arbeidslivets lover/ as subsequently amended, last by Act of 23 February 2007 No. 10, section 3-2; www.arbeidstilsynet.no, last visit 12.05.2010)

2.4. Communication and barriers in communication

Generally communication is described as the activity or process of expressing ideas and feelings or of giving people information. Speech is the fastest method of communication between people (S. Wehmeier, 2010). Psychologists define communication as transmission of something from one location to another. The 'thing' that is transmitted may be a message, a signal, etc. in order to have a communication both the transmitter and the receiver must share a common code, so that the meaning or information contained in the message may be interpreted without error (A. S. Reber, Emily S. Reber, 2001). As it was mentioned, this common code could be understood for both the transmitter (the one who send the message) and the receiver (the one who receive the message). If the 'thing' is a message then the language of the message should be understood for both sides of the communication process.

Communication is a process of transferring information from one entity to another. Communication processes are sign-mediated interactions between at least two agents, which share a repertoire of signs, and semiotic rules. Communication is commonly defined as "the imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by speech, writing, or signs" (Schwartz, Simon, Carmona 2008).

In the case of language in the communication aspect of the other authors P. Lindhout and C. van Gulijk write that: an important task of language is to allocate names and meaning to things in the perceivable environment and share this in a social context. All human societies use spoken language and pass their knowledge from generation to generation. Communication is most successful when the vocabulary in the language is shared between all inhabitants. On the other hand, language is also used to differentiate a group from other groups of people: there are different languages and dialects that distinguish between ethnographic groups and subgroups. It is these differences that may cause confusion about the meaning of some of the words. In life, this may not be a problem but when safety is at stake, errors are unwanted and need to be addressed (P. Lindhout, C. van Gulijk, 2009).

Barriers in communication can be caused by any disturbances between source/emisor and destination / receiver. In a simple model the information (message) should be sent in some particular form. This form could be e.g. spoken language, which needs to be understood and comprehensible. Without understanding the code (the language) there is no possibility to send communicate from coder to encoder.

Problems of language issues were described in a paper “Language issues, an underestimated danger in major hazard control?”(P. Lindhout, B. J.M. Ale, 2009). The research area was the companies in Netherland. The authors claim that individual factors, the multi-lingual shop floor setting and a variety of circumstances affecting communication are the conditions under which language issue can become a safety problem. For example, people at work in a multi-lingual and multi-cultural setting need to be trained to do so. If not properly attended to, such a condition of diversity creates language barriers, unwanted non-verbal behavior, prejudice and anxiety for the unknown (P. Lindhout, B.J.M. Ale, 2009, p.248). In the same studies the authors defined the rank of 22 language issues related dangers which are:

- Meeting about work not effective enough,
- Procedure not followed sufficiently,
- Written instructions / work permit not effective,
- Verbal instruction not effective (a.o. alarm, evacuation),
- Not informed about work procedure content,
- Dangers of dangerous substance not known,
- Safety instruction not effective (a.o. usage of safety provisions),
- Communication about safety not effective enough,
- Procedure not sufficiently readable or not clear,
- Change not understood (procedure, instruction, manual),
- Data recorded incorrectly (forms, lists),
- Professional keywords not known,
- Calculation errors,
- Mixing up left and right,
- Wrong interpretation of lists, tables, grasp and drawings,
- Location errors (map, plan view),
- Instructions for use of equipment not effective,
- Written information does not ‘arrive’

- Supervisor does not read well,
- Display information not understood,
- Gesture, hand/arm signal not correctly understood.

(ibid, p. 250)

For the purpose of the research the author will try to focus on three aspect from above which are not informed about work procedure, communication about safety not effective enough, information not understood. Of course, other issues will be described as well. Like it will be showed in two last chapters those issues will be very important for our research. Like it was mentioned before the communication issue might be a problem due to safety especially when we work with multi lingual team. Non-verbal behavior is also unwanted. It will be showed that many of workers based on gesticulation while accident and not many knows that gesticulation language can be very different for different people.

**Table 3: Proposed classification of language issues by cause and condition/
Source: P. Linhout, B.J.M. Ale, Journal of Hazardous Materials 172, 2009, p. 248/**

Cause	Condition		
	Personal development	Foreign language	Other factors
Poor education and training	Analphabetic Illiteracy Poor vocabulary Poor writing Poor reading Poor calculating	Not understood Other language Used to other gestures, pictograms, symbols	Diversity
Poor written communication	Wrong language level Too large documents Poor editing	Poor translation Too short display time	Medical problems (dyslexia etc.) Poor printing
Poorverbal communication	Communication via others Language skills	Multi-language shop floor Poor translator	Hurry Noise etc.

2.5. Challenges for public services and employees

The actors in this process have to be defined. In this context we have one group of actors who make the regulations: parliament, local authorities, agencies or governmental departments. The second group is the employers as those who are obligated to follow the rules / regulations. The last group is employees or any organizations to support them, like trade unions.

Norwegian employment relations are characterized by the pervasive influence of the State (including local government) and the central position played by national collective agreements. Thus, the central actors of the State, local government, and major employer and union bodies play a strong directive and controlling part; workplace partnerships cannot be understood without taking into account this 'context' (Johnsen & Joynt 1989). This context includes the financial and other resources with which these central actors can facilitate partnership processes. (S. Skinnarland, B. Grimsrud, and E. Rasmussen, 2006)

Based on enforcing of regulations the government and government organizations have the right to control and give sanctions in case of any irregularity. The sanctions pyramid shows hierarchy of four levels of sanctions: Based on enforcing of regulations theme the government and government organizations have the right to control and give any sanctions in case of any irregularity. The sanctions pyramid shows hierarchy of four levels of sanctions:

- Persuasion, shaming, deadlines, evidence, education and advice
- Warnings, infractions, written warnings, verbal warnings
- Notices: improvement and prohibition
- Criminal prosecution.

(Baldvin, Cave, 1999)

The Norwegian Labour Authority / The Labour Inspection Authority oversees that enterprises comply with the requirements of The Working Environment Act. Supervision will mainly be aimed at enterprises with the poorest working conditions, where there is little willingness to correct problems and where the agency's efforts will have the greatest effect. This is done by:

- Internal Control Audits,
- Reviews of enterprises' internal control systems to reveal whether regulations and procedures are being followed. An audit can take place over several days.
- Verifications / Inspections,
- Intermittent tests are used to check whether internal control systems function well and that companies meet legal requirements,
- Investigating Accidents,
- All serious and life threatening accidents are investigated by the Labour Inspection Authority,

(www.arbeidstilsynet.no)

Guidance and information is also large field of activity for The Norwegian Labour Authority. In addition to providing advice and guidance according to The Public Administration Act, the agency publishes a large amount of guidelines and brochures, the periodical Arbeidervern and participates in several Internet sites. The agency also prepares information material in connection with campaigns and other projects.

Since 1991, the Labour Inspection Authority has been working systematically with industries struggling with major working environment problems. There have been campaigns in a number of sectors, including the health sector, hotels and restaurants, construction, transport, agriculture and the police.

The introduction of identity cards is a measure aimed at achieving more effective control of employees' health, safety and working environment as well as greater accountability in the construction industry.

(www.arbeidstilsynet.no)

Table 5: Five key principles / keywords in the Health and Safety regulations promoted by Labor Inspection (Health, Safety and Environmental activities, The Labour Inspection, www.arbeidstilsynet.no)

ANALYSIS	Identify factors that may cause problems in the workplace, physical and mental
RISK MANAGEMENT	What factors may cause injury? What factors may cause risk?
PLANNING	How can problems be solved? Who is responsible? Target date and implementation?
FOLLOW – UP	What decisions have we made? What have we done? What have we not done? Why? Have any changes occurred underway?
COOPERATION	Employees are informed Employees have an opportunity to contribute with their know-how and experience Employees experience codetermination Employees know their job and its hazards best Employees' rights and obligations to participate in HSE work depend on information during training

3. Methods

“Every research project has to start somewhere. Typically this starting point is an idea”

(Bruce L. Berg, 1989, p. 15)

Referring to the quotation above, the author agrees that the idea is the most important starting point in research. Author of "Qualitative Research Methods" shows the whole tedious process of searching:

The starting point is the idea then it comes to the theory, design, data collection, analysis and findings. The second option proposed is the idea - literature review - Design - Data Collection and Organization - analysis and findings and Dissemination at the end of the (B.L. Berg, 1989, p. 18).

As mentioned before, the methodology of this dissertation consists of the analysis of the theory and also the study of both qualitative and quantitative data. Moreover, the author of this dissertation conducted a number of interviews with the employees of public institutions, non-governmental organizations, and also employers and employees of other sectors. As the interviews were informal and not structured by the formal list of questions, the conclusions are based upon my experience of the relations between the employers and employees and also the governmental institutions/ organization and their employees.

3.1. Review of literature

There were three main sources of information for this paper. The first is specialist literature. In this group we include any publications on health and safety issues, communication and language barriers. Those publications gave us good components of theoretical background. The second source was statistical overviews. Here we can mention two groups of sources: The first group is represented by official statistics from UDI (Norwegian Directorate of Immigration) and Statistics Norway (SSB). The second group is represented by reports from Institute for Labour and Social Research (FAFO), Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDI) and

International Organization for Migration (IOM). Other reports were also useful for this paper e.g. annual report from Service Center for Foreign Workers (SUA).

Differences between official statistics and real situation allowed us to gain some estimated statistics from newspapers and other sources including FAFO.

Data from SSB and UDI are mainly quantitative data presented in this paper are the facts about specific numbers of Polish immigrants and the Baltic Countries. The data give us a thorough knowledge of how many people came to Norway in a given year, how many people were granted work permit, study permit or family reunification. Most of these data is published in annual reports (for UDI) and the thematic reports (for SSB).

For the purposes of the research there is also important qualitative data that can be found mainly in publications from IMDI and FAFO. These publications will provide data of "everyday life" of immigrants as earnings, reasons for leaving the country, the knowledge of Norwegian language, the employment (legal or illegal), age, education, etc.

Two sources of data would give us certain useful knowledge about migration and living conditions of the new workers from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

The third source is the official information about rules and regulations, e.g. The Working Environment Act (Arbeidsmiljøloven). Most of them are the foundation of Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority's activity. That is why the third official source was the information found on Labour Inspection Authority website (www.arbeidstilsynet.no) and related to this European Agency for Safety and Health at Work's side Working Environment in Norway (www.arbeidsplassen.no).

3.2. Interview technique

The author has chosen an interview. Here one can cite the Salkind: the basic tool used in survey research is the interview. Interviews can take the form of the most informal questions and answers session on the sheet, to a highly structured, detailed interaction between interviewer and interviewed (N.S.Salkind, 2006, p. 186).

3.2.1. Clarifying the objects, time, place and language of interviews

The author of this paper decided to interview all three groups of actors: employees, employers and other organizations (SUA, IOM).

The first group was employees. The author tried to conduct interviews with representatives of all four nations (Polish, Latvians, Lithuanians and Estonians).

The second group was employers. The problem was that it could be quite difficult to interview directly quite large group of employers, which hire workers from Poland, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia. In this case the author of the thesis decided to have interview with work agencies. According to the results of FAFO's research there are four main ways of hiring Polish workers in the building and construction industry:

- Directly in a Norwegian company (32 % of active workers from Poland)
- In Norwegian employment agencies (31% of active workers from Poland)
- In foreign companies (24% of active workers from Poland)
- The self employed workers (13% of active workers from Poland),

(J.H. Friberg, G.Tyldum, FAFO 2007, p. 30-31)

A manager from work agency in Stavanger during the conversation with the author concluded:

"Most employees come to work in Norway through employment agencies such as e.g. Manpower and Adecco. Most of them treat this form of employment as a good start. After a while they find direct employment in the same company, which was lending them the agency to work earlier. I would say that over half of new employees coming to work in Norway via a work agency."

(Stavanger, 12 May 2010)

For this reason the author decided to interview employment agencies, which deal with recruiting people from other countries.

The third group of actors mentioned before in this paper was: state / public authorities. In this case, short interviews were conducted with: workers of the Labour Inspection Authority's.

To have a general view of the phenomena the author conducted a brief interview with:

- FAFO representative dealing with issues of migration from Central and Eastern Europe,
- IOM worker,
- Teacher of Norwegian for foreigners such as health and safety on language school in Bergen,
- SUA worker.

The author sent an invitation to a meeting to nine agencies in Stavanger. Five agencies responded positively. One of the agencies responded negatively. Four of work agencies in general have not responded to the invitation. In accordance to the wishes of the agency's staff, interviews were held mainly by phone or online. There was generally always somebody at the mentioned work agencies who could speak all three languages: Polish, Norwegian and English. Those persons were working as consultants. One person, who responded positively, was one of the owners of the agency. This person spoke only Norwegian and English. When the interview was on the phone, it took around 20-30 minutes.

In case of interviews with employees, author prepared questions in many languages. The interview contained 22 in most cases open questions. Each of respondents could also add some comments to each of the questions.

Stavanger was the main place of conducting the interviews.

Most of the interviews were held in the first half of 2010.

The author tried to carry out interviews of workers directly. To this end, the author conducted surveys with the target group in the following locations:

- The Catholic Church of St. Svithun in Stavanger, which held Mass in Polish every Sunday -twice a day (Polish)

- International Hus in Stavanger (mostly Polish but also Lithuanians),
- Airport in Sola (Stavanger), where the author could meet groups of Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians, etc. waiting to depart to their home countries,
- Restaurant "Pushkin" as an informal meeting place for Eastern European workers (mostly Lithuanians but also Polish, Latvians),
- Polish Food Shop "SMAK" in the heart of Stavanger (Polish),
- The Tax office in Stavanger, which now houses the SUA,
- other random places.

The best results achieved at the Sola Airport and the hall of Tax Office in Stavanger. The groups of workers did not always want to take part in the survey. The main explanation was "lack of time". In the case of Airport and the Tax Office it turned out to be a 'useful' issue which was: long waiting time in the queue. It was easier to carry out surveys as a kind of activity during this long waiting time.

In the case of the author's own research is conducted interviews, the author had to use other languages in addition. These languages were: Polish, Lithuanian and Russian.

As a reason for selecting just these three languages were:

- Most of workers from eastern Europe speak neither English nor Norwegian,
- Workers from the Baltic Countries due to historical conditions (Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia are the only countries in the European Union which were a part of the USSR before, where Russian was the official language and compulsory in schools) are fluent in Russian,
- Most of Polish workers only speak Polish language, their mother tongue,
- Workers from the Baltic Republics and Poland are the largest group of workers from Central and Eastern Europe in Norway (as shown in the section on statistics).

We can also add a practical reason which was availability of people using the foreign languages. Author's native language is Russian. In the case of Polish and Lithuanian author received help from interpreters.

3.2.2. Criticism of the chosen method

One of important issue is to find weak and strong sides of the method of the research. The problem is quite complicated to present it very precisely. The first of main issues is the method which had been chosen which was interview. Author agrees that this method will not show us precisely how large is the problem of language barriers due to safety regulations among workers from Poland and the Baltic Republics. The size of the problem or its quantities issues the author decide to base that on already existing researches e.g. FAFO publications. Choosing the interview author wanted to show the individual experiences and observations of all three groups of actors. The weak thing is that the real size of problem and any correlation will be not really proven. From the other hand the individual experiences of particular workers or employers will be given. In simple words the quantities aspects will be based on already existed statistics and the qualitative aspects will be based on the research. Another reason for choosing interview was that the author decided to talk individually with respondents to find out some more details from their own experiences. The author was interested in specific situations and examples. According to Blaike Norman the study of single person, perhaps as in-depth case studies, lies on boundary of social science, particularly' if the person's social context is given little or no attention. It is possible to report their social experiences, i.e. their interaction with other people. (Blaike Norman, 2005, p.193)

The intention of author was also to write more sociological research based on individuals stories.

That is why the author focused on individual actors in the research.

There can be mentioned some advantages, disadvantages and recommendation while the personal interview is used as a research method. Main advantages are frequently used to gauge attitudinal behavior, very good response rates and longer interviews tolerated. Main disadvantage is that interview may produce a non representative sample. It is recommended to use while testing very specific target population that has interest in a particular problem, service or product.(<http://knowledge/base.supersurvey.com/in/person/vs/web/surveys.htm>, last visit 12.08.2010)

The author doesn't mean that the interviews both with employees and employers are representative but they do only confirm that the problem of language due to safety regulations does exist.

It has to be pointed that interview is not main source of our information. Conclusions have to be based on theory, statistics and interviews.

Some strengths of qualitative research are: the data are based on the participants own categories of meaning, it is useful for describing phenomena, can describe in rich details phenomena, one can use an important case to demonstrate vividly a phenomenon to the readers of a report. One might find also some weakness of qualitative methods knowledge produced may not generalize to other people i.e. finding may be unique to the relatively few people included in the research study, it is difficult to make quantitative predictions and the results are more easily influenced by the researchers personal biases and idiosyncrasies (R. Burke Johnson, A. J. Onwuegbuzie, 2006, p.19)

As it was mentioned before the author decided to base on individual factors according to the research problem. We had three main sources of information and reliance based on evidence taken from the literature and statistics. The collected data was identical to the data stated in the literature, thus it can be generally regarded as valid and reliable.

3.2.3. Ethical issues

The author should remember that there is a system of ethical protections in research which have been created to protect the right of participants. The principles are:

- voluntary participation,
- informed consent,
- risk of harm,
- confidentiality,

- anonymity,
- right to service. (<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/ethics.php>) The author

of this paper assured everyone that all principles will be guaranteed.

The author had to face some ethical dilemma during conducting interviews. During each interview there is an important ethical aspect. I tried to ask such questions which did not interfere in the private sphere. Participation in the interview was voluntary and anonymous.

All the respondents were informed of confidentiality. The information about it was posted on the top of the list with questions.

Participants were well informed about purpose of the research and why they were asked about that concrete issue. They understood the utility of the research.

The author didn't publish the name of the companies. The intention of author was not to write negative expression both about employers and employees. The only one company which is mentioned is Adecco as a quotation from FAFO rapport.

The author decided not to use personal information like e.g. real names and date of birth. Some of thesis use to change the names of participants. The author of this research decided not to use their names at all. Instead of writing the name of agency, the expression that the consultant from agency was quoted.

4. Data presentation

4.1 Findings from the literature

In order to understand the present and situation of an individual interviewee, we need to know as much as possible about his or her personal and interpersonal history. Wengraf, 2009

The author shows here the phenomenon of labor migration in Norway. In particular, this applies to migration from the countries of Central Europe and Eastern Europe. These data will be based mainly on statistical data.

Statistics are divided into qualitative and quantitative.

There can be find some weakness about quantitative statistics. Data from UDI don't include migration from Nordic countries: Danmark, Iceland, Finland and Sweden. Those they need permission to stay in Norway. Those data not always include temporary workers and people who stay in Norway illegal.

Findings from literature will be also given.

4.1.1. Findings based on statistics

4.1.1.1 Quantitative statistics

According to SSB (Statistics Norway) there are today over 552 000 migrants in Norway. These people either arrived or were born in Norway in families of migrants. This represents 11.4 percent of the total population.

Approximately 257 000 people with a background in Europe, 199,000 from Asia, 67 000 have origins in Africa and 18 000 with background in Central and South America. In addition, there are 11,000 people with backgrounds in North America and Oceania. Most migrants are from Poland, Sweden, Germany and Iraq. (www.ssb.no/innvandring)

Figure 2: Migration to Norway in 2009 by region of origin (SSB, 2010)

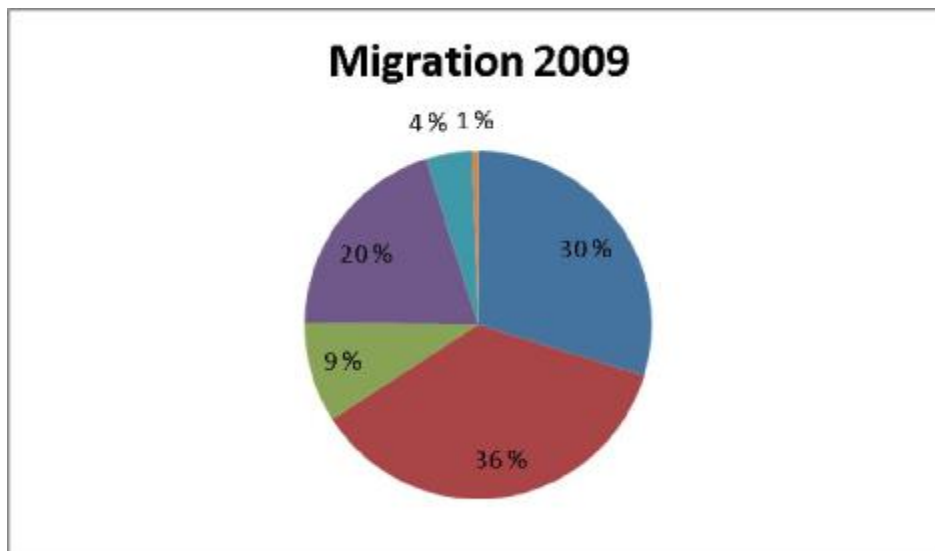
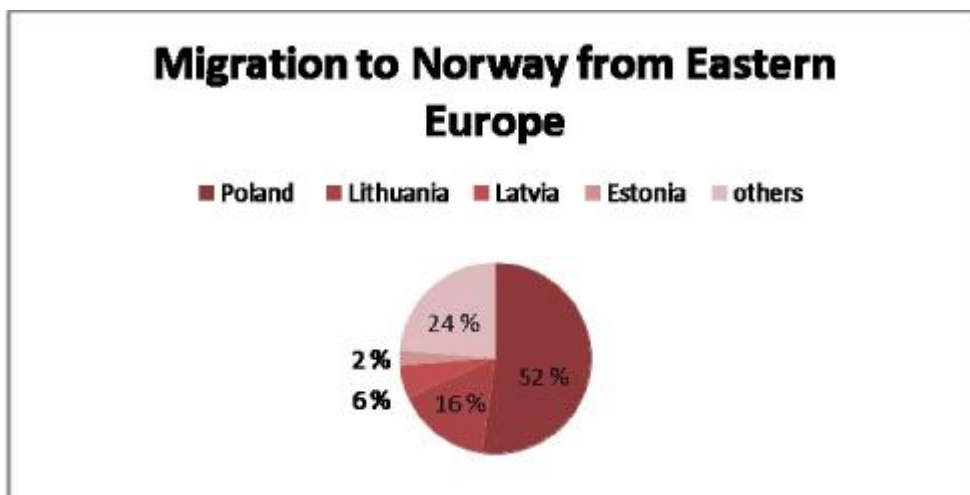


Figure 3: Migration to Norway from Eastern-Europe by citizenship (ssb; 2010)



In 2009 around 100 000 new immigrants came to Norway. Most of them were from Eastern Europe.

The next section aims to provide the number of permits issued for so-called new EU members” in relation to total work permits issued. Author was to show the percentage of workers from the Baltic Republics, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria in relation to all permits issued in 2006-2009. Here as well it should be noted that Bulgaria and Romania joined the European Union later and it includes a transition period. The author also decided to re-group Poland and three Baltic countries and show the percentage of permits issued in relation to the total. The data was based on statistics of UDI. Included data is only for the permits

issued to employees. The overview not includes data that relate to permits issued for studies, education, family reunification, au pair, etc. The reason is that the area of interest of this thesis was mostly to work on aspects of foreign workers in Norway only.

These figures do not include the citizens of Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Iceland. Citizens of these countries do not need work permit and settle down in Norway. These figures also do not separating the new work permits and renewal. Therefore the data from each year will be not added up. For example, you can specify that in 2009 there were around 50 000 work permits issued to polish immigrants, but 40% out of all work permits were issued as a prolongation of already exiting permits.

Figure 4: Work permits issued in 2006, by citizenship (source: UDI 2007)

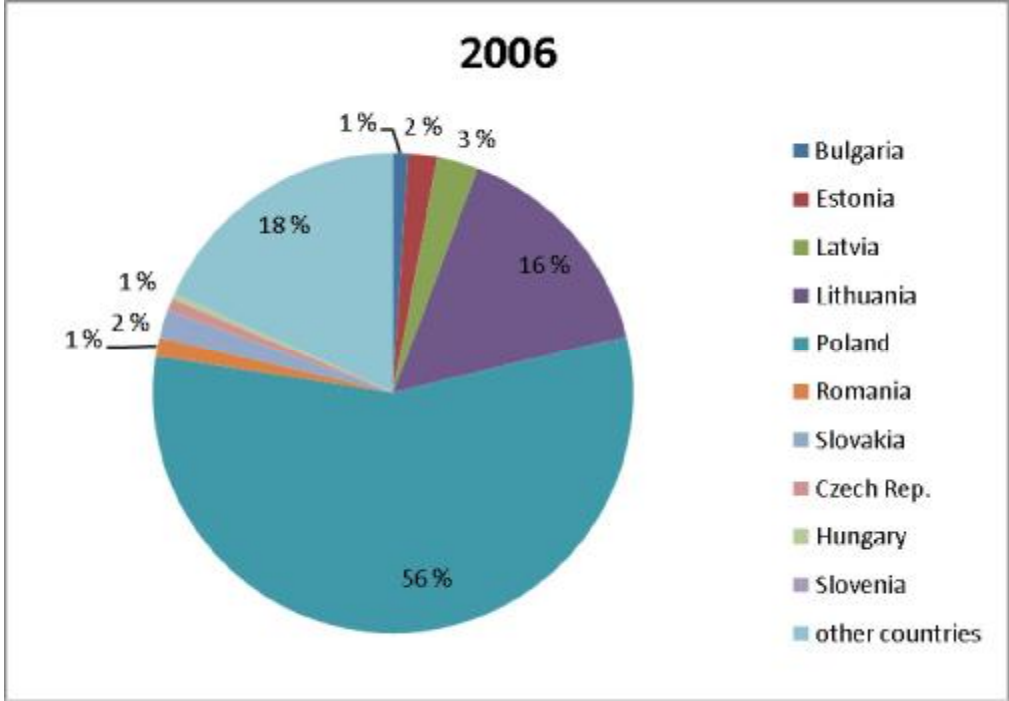
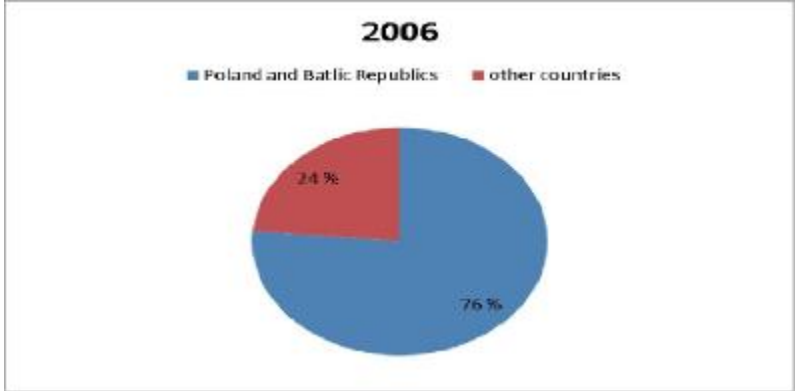


Figure 5: Participation of Polish and the Baltic Republics citizens in relation to total work permits issued in 2006 (source: UDI 2007)



The 2006 was the second full year after Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and other countries became members of EU. The number of migrant workers was estimated on slightly over a bit more than 70 000 people. It means that, compared with the previous year, the number of immigrants had doubled. Polish workers received more than 50% of all permits. Lithuanians received 10 659 work permits (16%), Latvians 1 908 permits (about 3%), Estonians 1 357 permits (approx. 2%).

Figure 6: Work permits issued in 2007, by citizenship (source: UDI 2008)

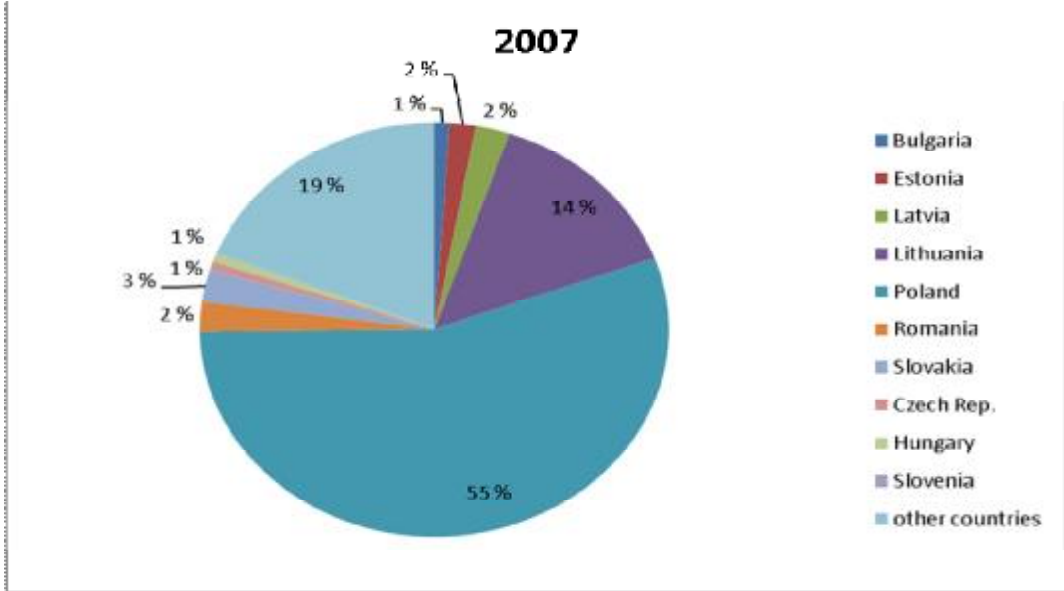
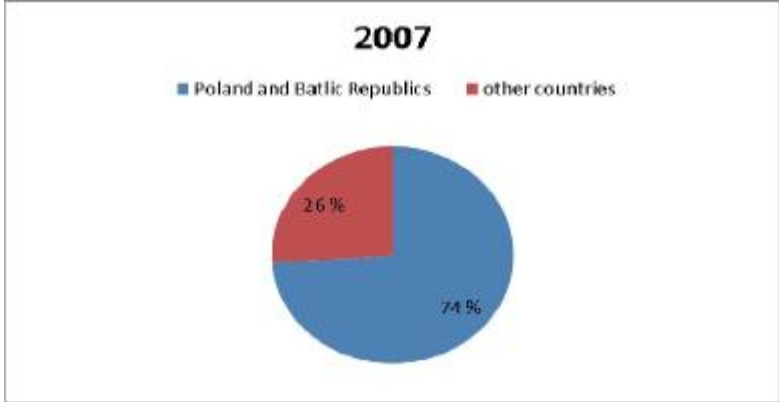


Figure 7: Participation of Polish and the Baltic Rep. citizens in relation to total work permits issued in 2007 (source: UDI 2008)



In 2007 citizens from Polish Republic received more than 55% of all work permits issued in 2007 to workers from East-Europe. Lithuanians received 13 626 work permits. This represented approximately 14 percent of all work permits issued. 2 245 work permits were issued to citizens from Latvia (a little over 2 percent). Estonians received 1 722 work permits (a little less than 2 percent). Poland and the three Baltic countries accounted for in total 74 percent of the total issued permits.

Figure 8: Work permits issued in 2008, by citizenship (source:UDI 2009)

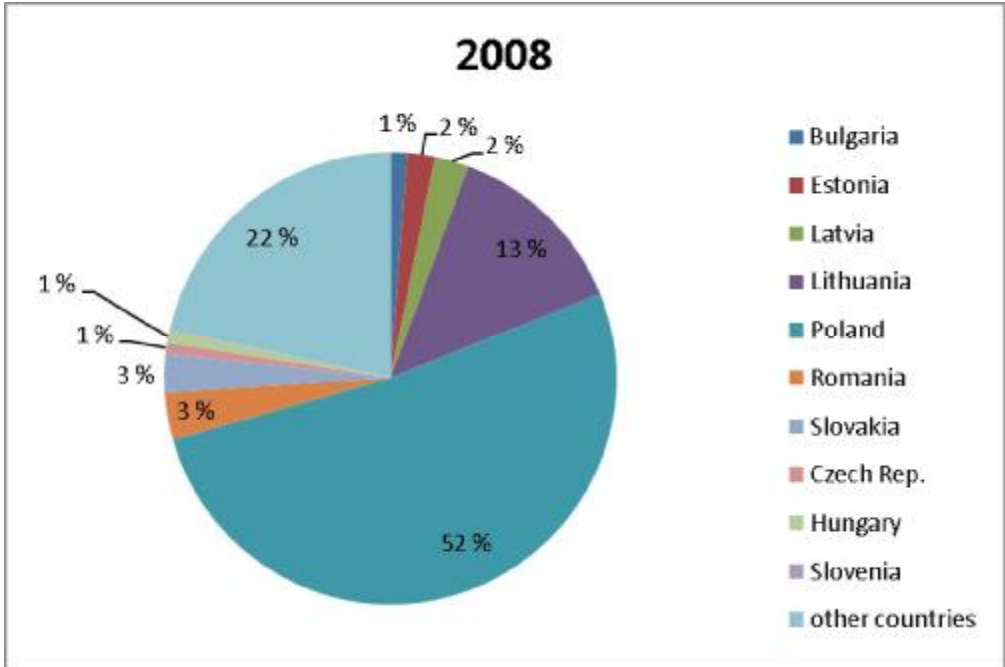
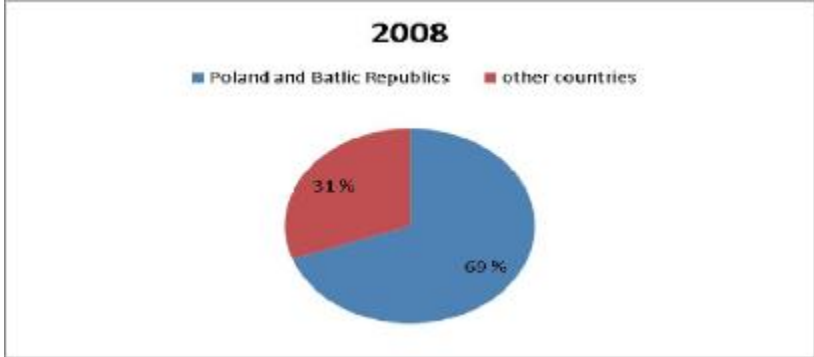


Figure 9: Participation of Polish and the Baltic Rep. in total number of issued permits (source: UDI 2009)



There can be notified many records in 2008 due to migration phenomenon in Norway. That was the largest number of permissions to work in the history of Norway. In total there were 103 074 work permits. Also the number of the work permits issued to the Polish citizens was the highest in history. The Polish received 52 289 licenses. This represents more than 50% of all work permits issued. Citizens of Lithuania received, indeed, less than the work permits in 2007. In total, Polish citizens, and all three Baltic republics have received 69% of all work permits. This means that every second employee came from Poland and 7 out of 10 workers from the region were Polish and the Baltic region.

Figure 10: Work permits issued by citizenship (source: UDI 2010)

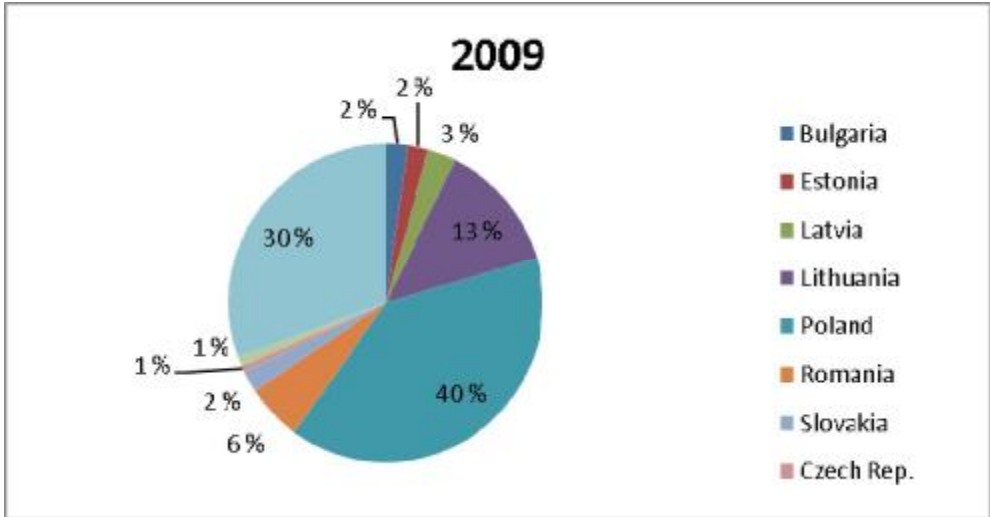
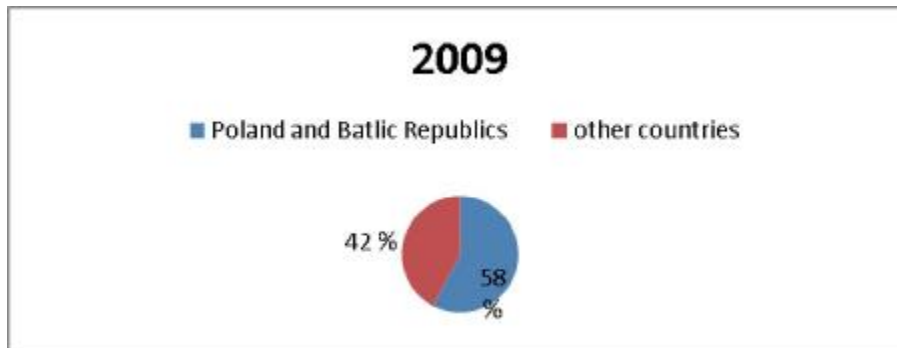


Figure 11: Participation of Polish and the Baltic Rep. citizens in relation to total work permits issued in 2009 (source: UDI 2010)



In 2009 there were 58 060 work permits issued in Norway. Most of them were granted to the Polish citizens. In total 40 percent (22,136 licenses) of all permits were granted to Polish. Lithuanians received 13 percent of all work permits. In total, 7,385 permits were granted to residents of Lithuania. Citizens of Estonia and Latvia have received little more than a thousand work permits each. This represents about 3% of all granted permits. An interesting situation is if they add up licenses given to the Polish, Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians, and put them into one group. If it is found that the 32 382 work permits for a total of 58% of all permits were granted to Poland and three Baltic Republics.

To conclude it should also be noted that, on average, nine out of ten work permits were granted to citizens of the EEA. At the end of 2009 work permits for EEA citizens have been abolished and replaced by registration, which is unlimited. Citizens of Bulgaria and Romania still need to apply for a work permit.

4.1.1.2 Working migration and language problems

This section will be based mainly on qualitative statistics, which might help us to find the answers to the questions about the reality of life of the new immigrants from Poland and the Baltic Republics. The questions will be: What were the reasons to ones visit to Norway? How much money do they earn? Where do they work?

This chapter will not only focus on specific figures, but also provide the numbers of migrants in terms of quality. In the selection of information I will also try to concentrate on aspects of language among the new migrants and they do they find necessary help and information.

Generally, all newcomers in Norway who obtained a residence permit due to the asylum, family reunification, etc. have the duty and/or right to take Norwegian language course (total 300 hours) and knowledge of Norwegian society (in total 50 hours). These courses are free and paid by the state. Workers from the European Economic Area countries are deprived of that right. They also do not have such an obligation (FAFO 2007 p.70, www.udi.no). Typically, employers are expected to assure that they will arrange Norwegian language course for their employees.

Why might that course be necessary? The answer is that lack of knowledge makes the following problems:

- Misunderstanding of the principles of safety,
- Segregation, the separation between the Norwegian workers and those from other countries,
- Ignorance of workers' rights and obligations (contracts and instructions are usually in the Norwegian language)

(FAFO, 2007, s.70)

Lack of knowledge of Norwegian was also recognized as a problem in the IMDI report. The 2008 report presents the situation of migrants from the Polish and the Baltic Republics.

Here are some results of the survey which was carried out among migrant workers from Poland and the Baltic Countries.

- 74% came to Norway for employment and the Polish represent the nationality with the highest percentage. Almost all the men came to Norway to work. Most women came to Norway to be reunited with husbands,
- 9 out of 10 respondents are in work and almost 8 out of 10 have a permanent work. 90% of them are employed in a Norwegian company or have been placed by Norwegian temporary employment agency and are consequently covered by Norwegian transitional rules. The source of employment affects working condition.

Approximately 70 percent of workers have found work which suits, in whole or part, their own education or/and competences. Almost six out of ten respondents work in the industry/manual sector including building and construction. 70 percent of the Polish work in that sector, while those from the Baltic areas are spread across many more sectors.

- Polish and Lithuanians workers find the great discrepancy between their own pay and that of Norwegian colleagues who are doing equivalent work while almost half of the respondents work more than 37, 5 hours per week.

- Most migrant workers have a significant need for world-related information about pay and working conditions, tax regulations and personal relations. Many of workers do not know where to go if they have problems with their employers, or they choose not to do anything about the problem for fear of losing their job.

- 4 out of 10 of migrant workers from Poland and the Baltic countries registered on the national registry office have not taken language courses or language tests. Of those who have not taken Norwegian course or any language tests: almost half state that combining a course with working hours is a great barrier to participate in that course, about 3 out of 10 find they can get by in Norway with English or German,

- Almost 3 out of 4 express a need for improved Norwegian language skills in order to get on better in their work. The most significant barrier to receiving information among Polish migrant workers, does not understand Norwegian or the English language and that many find it difficult to know where to find relevant information.

- Migrant workers make use of many different information channels and these complement each other. The most important information channels for migrant workers are friends, followed by media.

(O. Kaldheim, Vi blir ... IMDI 2008, Oslo, p. 77-79).

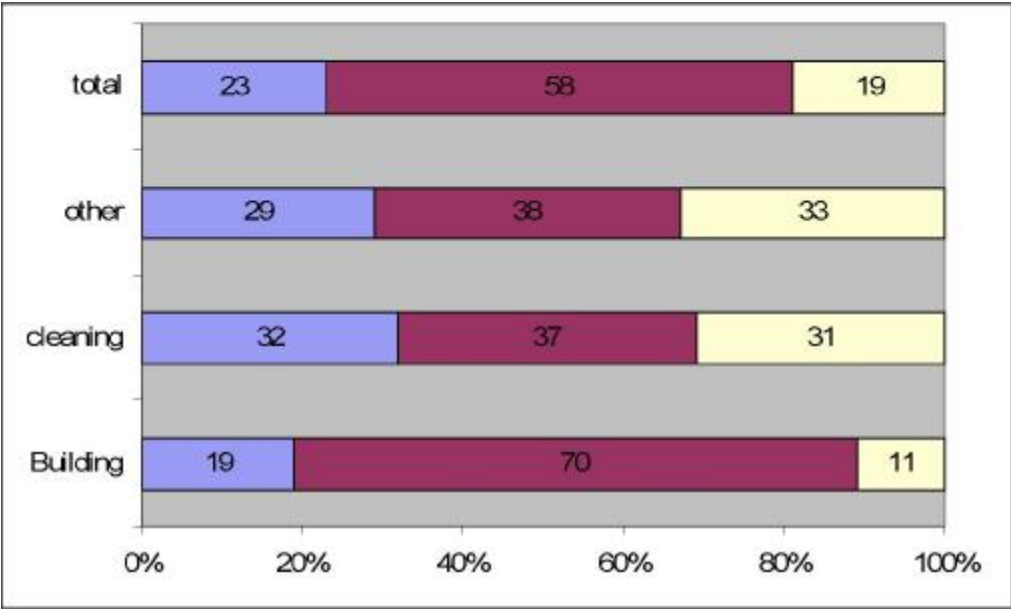
In another report from FAFO we can read that only 2 percent of workers from Eastern Europe are able to communicate in one of the Scandinavian languages. 27% declared that they can speak English but as many as 41% mentioned that they did know any foreign language. (K. Alsos, A.M. Ødegård, FAFO, 2007, p.81)

Another FAFO report shows that the increase in the number of workers from the region of Central and Eastern Europe quickly led to problems of safety on construction sites in Norway. 35 percent of construction firms that employ workers from the Central and Eastern Europe, declared that new employees have caused quite dangerous

situations in the workplace. 17 percent also stated that lack of knowledge of Norwegian language and lack of communication led to many unfortunate events. This had a significant problem with understanding safety regulations in Norway. The author also stated that those employees have been used mainly for the most difficult works. Many workers, which were afraid of losing their jobs, accept the work conditions which would be unacceptable for their Norwegian colleagues. 86 percent of employers said they would need safety training for new workers from East Europe. 40 percent declared that such training was carried out in some form. (FAFO, 2006, p. 16).

The level of education of immigrants is also an important aspect. The author assumes that, the workers who had higher education would more likely speak foreign language that those with no higher education

Figure 12: Level of education related to occupation among Polish workers (FAFO, 2007, p.33)

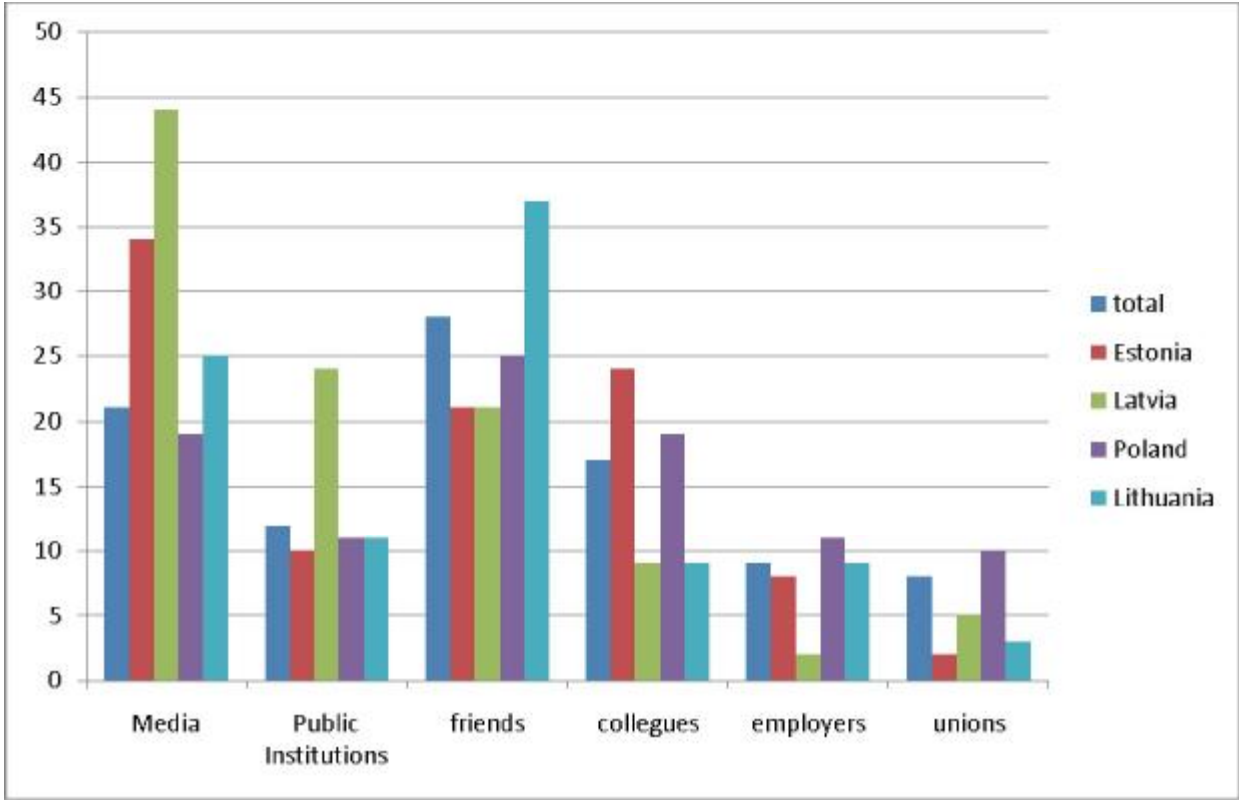


As we can see in the figure above, most of the Polish workers had relevant education in the field of their work. In the Polish education system, there is an institution "technikum" which is equivalent to the trade-oriented school. Those who fail to complete school have no proper education but if they fail only general education but not training, then they have a proper occupation. What is know in Norwegian as a "fagbrev" As one can see, most of the Polish workers have the relevant qualifications in the construction (building) sector and 70% of the employed has qualification to the

profession. A significant number of people with higher education work below their qualifications: 31% of workers in the cleaning sector declared higher education. (FAFO, 2007, p.33).

According to IMDI’s research most citizens from Poland and the Baltic Countries gain the information mostly from two sources: labor unions and employers. Media are main source of information for 44% of Lithuanians and only for 20% of the Polish. 25% of the Latvians gain information from public authorities. 38% Lithuanians gain information from their friends (IMDI, p.59). The respondents answered also that workers of public institutions tried to help them but the language was a barrier in communication. Many of them also admitted that they did not know to which one of public authorities they should go with a specific problem. Nevertheless, as noted, most of them recognized that employees in the state institutions, despite the language barriers, tried to help migrant workers the best they could (ii, p. 60).

Figure 13: Sources of information’s in total and by nationality /percents/ IMDI, 2007, p.59/



4.1.2 Findings from observations and other sources

The Labour Inspectorate has much information in Polish. The most important include: telephone information line in the Polish language, The Working Environment Act in Polish, contracts for work in Polish, a website in Polish and many brochures in Polish.

Employees from Poland can easily access the information in Polish about health and safety at work, leave, work time, termination, ergonomics, the risks associated with the use of chemicals, cranes, machinery, safety services, etc. State Labour Inspectorate has launched a phone line in the Polish language. The information line is open two days a week (Tuesdays and Fridays) from 08 to 16.45.

The Working Environment Act is the basic instrument in the field of labor law in Norway is also available in Polish and English. From the website of the Labour Inspectorate everyone can download the compressed file translated into Polish and / or English. The brochure can also be ordered by mail. Shipping is free.

There is also a website of the Labour Inspectorate available in Polish. (www.arbeidstilsynet.no). Here Polish workers can find information in their native language about:

- Rules and regulations,
- Comments, guides about working law in Norway,
- Answers to common questions regarding the working environment and health and safety,

Users can also subscribe to newsletters and receive them direct to the mail box.

Many publications were issued. One of them titled "THE SELF EMPLOYED in the building and construction industry: a safer, better working environment" is available in Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian. In this publication following information are provided:

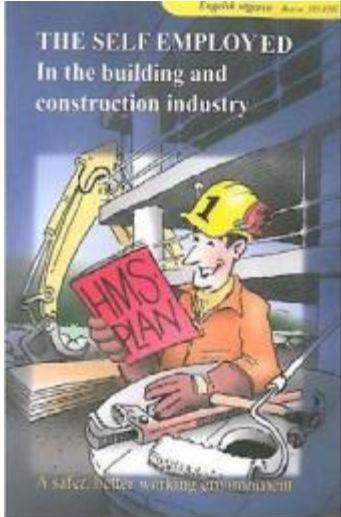
- rules and regulations to provide a safer and better working environment,
- Regional Safety Delegates,
- Co-ordination of health and safety issues on the construction site,
- reporting,
- clarification in relation to the employer,
- responsibilities of employers,
- example of work contract (bilingual) etc.

An important initiative was the edition of the book "New in Norway". The project was based on co-operation of many actors including: Labor Inspection, Tax office, Police and others. The book provide a lot useful information like: tax declarations, safety regulations and others. The book is also available on-line.

Picture 1: Health, Safety and Environmental activities information issued by Labour Inspection, an example in English



Picture 2: The self employed in the building and construction industry, issued by Labor Inspection, an example in English.



The Labour Inspection Authority, the Police, the Tax Administration, and the Directorate of immigration have established together Service Centre for Foreign Workers (SUA) in Oslo in 2007. Two years after SUA has opened two more divisions: one in Stavanger (western part of Norway) and one in Kirkenes (north of Norway). Service Centers offers help to European workers in many languages e.g. Polish, Russian and Lithuanian. The Labour Inspection is one of the divisions at the Service Center.

Only in 2009 there were 5781 foreign workers looking for the help from The Labour Inspection in SUA in Oslo and 335 in Stavanger's division of Service Centre. It is necessary to mention that SUA in Stavanger was established in the end of 2009 (last week of October). There is no Labour Inspection at SUA in Kirkenes (www.sua.no; SUA annual report 2009).

According to a study by the Fafo in 2007, approximately 88% of Polish workers have expressed the need for a Norwegian language course. Almost just as many workers expressed the need for information in their native language to be available. They point out here that they have need for information about workers' rights. The need of Polish interpreters expressed 86% of workers. About 60% of Polish expressed their need for institutions that would inform them about working conditions, pay and employment rights. (Fafo, s.88). SUA could be a solution to that needs. Like it was mentioned, the service should be able to speak many languages including Polish, Russian and Lithuanian.

Based on those statistics establishing SUA was a very positive action by public authorities and answers for the demands of Polish and other Eastern Europeans workers.

Table 6: Number of applicants to individual division of SUA in both Oslo and Stavanger (source: SUA, 2010)

Place	Labour Inspection	Police	Tax Authority	total
Oslo	5781	35617	35446	76844
Stavanger	335	1939	1251	3522
Total	6116	37687	37372	81175

As we see in the table above, notification of problems and questions to the Labour Inspection in accounted for approximately 5% of all queries and questions at SUA.

"With respect to the statistics it should be noted that the visit to the Police and Migration Department are mandatory for employees. If a person arrives in Norway must apply for a residence permit and / or work permit. The Administration must also submit a request for skattekort (tax reduction card) and National Security number (permanent or temporary). The Labour Inspectorate has a more advisory nature. Applicants mainly come here for advice or check if the work contract they received is legal and valid. If they were almost 600 workers visit Labour Inspectorate at SUA then I honestly think this is a very large number. "

SUA worker, Stavanger, 4th june 2010

Workers applying with the problems to the Labour Inspectorate were mainly from Poland and Lithuania. During the first six months of Labour Inspections at SUA visited 92 Polish citizens and 47 citizens of Lithuania. Lithuanians, Latvians and Polish represent 86% of visitors.

Table 7: Workers applying to the Labour Inspection / SUA Stavanger, by nationality from January till June 2010 (source: månedsrapport SUA Stavanger)

citizenship	Numbers of visitors	%
Poland	92	54
Lithuania	47	27
Latvia	9	5
Russia	9	5
Others	15	9

Pic. 2: Mini guide for foreign business and employees in connection with assignments in Norway or Norwegian continental shelf issued by Central Office / Foreign Tax Affairs (COFTA), example of polish edition, march 2010.



The problems, with which people were applying to the Labour Inspectorate, were focused on irregularities in contracts, not paying salary, wages for overtime, work at night, holiday allowances and questions about the ID-card in construction sector.

Tabel 8: Workers applying to the Labour Inspection / SUA by nationality from January 2010 till June 2010 (source: månedsrapport SUA Stavanger)

problem	number of visitors	%
working time	10	4
Work contract	94	34
payment	81	19
Idcard	20	7
Welfare	16	6
Others	52	19

According to the FAFO report, approximately 20% of Poles are organized in trade unions. Most of them work in the agencies work. Friberg calls it ‚Adecco-effect‘. Only in 2007 around 40% of Polish workers employed by Adecco Norge in Oslo, joined the union. The main reason which was given: problems with the tariff pay and housing problems. (FAFO, 2007, p. 80) .

Attention should be paid to the IOM operation, which in 2009 and a year later, organized comprehensive courses for the Poles in their native language.

According to Final Report to the Government of Norway Directorate of Integration and Diversity the results of project “Empowering Polish construction workers” were impressive:

- 30 Polish construction workers have received the project’s training program. 25 persons completed the program and would obtain a diploma,
- It was expected that with the multiplier effect, the project would benefit at least 800 Polish workers. The resource persons have further shared their knowledge with additional 1025 Polish construction workers as a result of information meetings held their work places,
- On the project’s website key information have been posted in Polish, English and Norwegian about the employees’ rights, responsibilities and of the Norwegian laws and regulations. The information posted on the project’s website aimed at potentially benefits thousands of other target group members. It was expected that the project website would reach 2500 visitors during the project implementation. During the

period from 1 April 2009 to 25 January 2010 the project website had more than 4700 visitors. The most frequently visited section of the website was the Polish Edition which had 3997 visitors. (IOM, 2010, p. 3-4).

"There were 60 people involved in our project in Stavanger, 30 industry workers and their spouses. The idea was that after the course is completed, all of the persons who participated would understand Norwegian law and rules. They would know where to go with a concrete problem. Polish people are not entitled to free language course. We also organized 100 hours of Norwegian course. Free of fee."

IOM, Stavanger, 30 august 2010

Pic. 3: One of the sessions organized by IOM in Stavanger (taken from IOM)



4.2. Empirical findings from the interviews

4.2.1. General information

The interviews involved 14 people: 12 men and two women. 5 people were under the age of 25 years. The same number of people was aged between 26 and 45 years. One person was older than 66 years. The rest of the people were in the group: from 46 to 65 years. One woman was under 25 years of age. The second woman was located in the group of people: 26-40 years. 9 people claimed that they completed secondary education and three had an elementary education. Both

women declared they had completed education on a higher level (3 or 5 years studies). One man declared higher education. This man was aged over 66 years. 8 people came from Poland, three from Lithuania, 1 from Latvia and 1 from Estonia. Both women came from Poland.

Five people worked directly for a Norwegian employer, six persons for work agencies, two persons for foreign companies and one had his own business. Five Poles worked directly for a Norwegian employer, three Poles were employed by a work agency. One Polish had his own business. One Polish worker was hired by foreign company in Norway. Two Lithuanians worked through the employment agency and one Lithuanian worked directly for a Norwegian company. An Estonian worked through an agency, one person from Latvia for foreign company in Norway.

Three people had been working in Norway for less than half a year. Also three people worked less than one year but longer than six months. six people worked in Norway for more than one year but less than three years. One person worked less than five years but more than three years. One person worked in Norway for more than five years. People who work directly in Norwegian companies had mainly worked in Norway for about a year or less than six months. One person, who was employed by the work agency, worked in Norway for more than five years. Persons, who were employed by a foreign employer, worked in Norway temporarily. This often involved the nature of the activities of foreign companies which send workers for a specific work in Norway. Those persons were hired by Norwegian companies e.g. during the holidays, when many workers are on vacation, or to some special projects.

4.2.2. Employment sector and language skills

Most of the people which worked in Norway were employed in the construction sector, some in transport, some in the food sector and one of them declared a different kind of industry. Those who declared employment in the food sector have worked through a work agency and one directly for a Norwegian employer. This person pointed out however, that he first also began work via an agency. After some time the person was recruited directly by the employer. Workers employed in the

construction sector were both employed via agency and work directly for a Norwegian employer.

In case of the knowledge of the English language, two people declared that their knowledge of English was very good, 2 declared that it was quite good, four declared it was good. The rest of respondents declared they had a basic level or no knowledge of English. Those who declared that their English was good were in most cases residing Norway quite shortly (not more than 3 years). These were mainly young people from Poland. Those who declared a basic knowledge of English were out of the oldest group of workers. The situation was bit different with the knowledge of the Norwegian language: 5 out of 14 declared that their knowledge of Norwegian could be described as good. The rest of respondents declared basic level of Norwegian or no knowledge of that language. Those who declared good level of Norwegian had been working in Norway for a quite long time and were hired via a work agency.

The explanation for that could be that most of the agencies / employers declared that they did organized language course in past.

"Even three years ago we offered free or very cheap Norwegian courses for employees. Now, unfortunately, it would cost too much due to the significant increase of employment of people from Central and Eastern Europe."

Consultant from work agency, Stavanger, 12.june 2010

Others employers declared more less the same: that the costs and lack of real effects were the main reasons to stop the language courses.

Many employers pointed that workers very often worked for 10 to 12 hours. It was hard for them to attend the course after.

Only one ensured that they organized Norwegian courses for new employees. The courses were held in Poland, in Szaflary (FAFO, 2007, p.81)

IMDI says in its report that only 20 percent of Polish immigrants and those from the Baltic Republics had completed the Norwegian course and passed the exam. Another 20 percent had only completed the course. The rest of them did not complete the course or passed the exam. This data referred to men. The situation with women is different. Almost 90% of women from the Polish and Baltic Countries, who had been residing in Norway for more than four years, have finished Norwegian course with any diploma / certification of Norwegian language (IMDI, 2008, p. 43).

"This situation does not surprise me. Normally a man would first come to work in Norway. Then after a year or two his wife would come, based on family reunification. The wife is most likely without a work but with huge ambitions and better education. She has time to attend a Norwegian course. During my daily courses women constitute 80% of all students"

Teacher from language school in Bergen, 10 August 2010

We can also find such conclusion in the IMDI Rapport (2008, p. 43) of the majority of women coming to Norway had higher education. First comes the man and after achieving an economic stabilization he can bring his wife and children. For women it is more difficult to adapt to work realities in Norway. Therefore they have much more time to learn the language, which in the future should allow them to find a better work.

An interesting observation from our study is that the people who declare that they can speak the English language, they don't speak Norwegian.

"It is very often that workers who speak English just don't want to learn Norwegian. After several years of work they just have noticed that knowledge of English in Norway is just enough. Of course, not everywhere. Our company recruits many workers to kindergartens. I cannot imagine a worker who takes care of children and does not know the Norwegian language".

Consultant from work agency, Stavanger, 12 May 2010

The majority of the respondents stated that the employer did not arrange Norwegian courses. Only 4 persons were sent to a Norwegian course. They were employed via a work agency (Adecco). As it was mentioned before the course was in Poland. Two people declared participation in these courses. They were the ones with a "long" period of staying in Norway and young people working for an agency.

Workers hired in a Norwegian company or / and foreign company did not declare that they attended any course arranged by their employer.

The explanation may be very simple: Norwegian companies often hire not as many workers from abroad as work agencies. If a Norwegian company has a need for workers it most likely will hire these from a work agency. Then the company expects that the worker will have had language training.

One of the work agencies has developed a base of language courses in Poland and in Norway where they have a favorable agreement with the language schools.

Foreign companies usually hire workers on a rotation system. They work usually three weeks in Norway and come here for 3 weeks to their home country. They do not want to stay in Norway for a long period of time.

4.2.3. HSE trainings

According to FAFO's report everyone who works in Norway must follow Norwegian rules for safety. It does not matter whether the employer is Norwegian or not Norwegian (K. Alsos, 2007, p.9). Another problem is many differences between the principles of safety in Poland and Norway. As noted by the author of Polish specific was still under legislation work. Poland, in contrast to Norway, has not ratified several major conventions such as the European Convention C 167 Safety and Health Construction or C 162 Asbestos Convention (K. Alsos, 2007, p.65). Although health and safety regulations are based on common EU regulations, their implementation is done differently. Norway had more time, of course, to adapt their health and safety

rules to the EU standards. Although ironically Norway is not even an EU member. Poland is actually in the period of harmonization of law (ii, p. 7). Statistical results are quite alarming: the rate of accidents in Norway in 1000 workers is 2.98 and 11.58 in Poland (data for 2004). Around 86 percent of the companies in Norway expressed needs for training of Polish workers in the field of HMS (ii. p. 7).

Based on interviews conducted by the author most of the people confirmed that they had a health and safety training. A person who worked for a foreign employer had no such training. The person, who ran his own business, did not have such training either.

Many interesting results are presented due to the language in which such training was conducted.

Here most people responded that the course was conducted both in the Norwegian language and English. Five of the people responded that the course was well maintained in their native language. All of those five people came from the Poland. The course or courses were conducted in English or in Polish or in English, with Polish translation/interpreters. Workers from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia did not have course in their native language. Some of them however, declared that they had received all the theoretical information in their native language e.g. translated grounds of safety, health and safety routines, etc.

All the interviewed companies declared that they organized HSE course. The courses were presented in two ways:

- Polish worker carries out a basic course of health and safety regulations, but in the presence of Norwegian HSE specialist, in case someone from participants had additional questions,
- The course is run by the Norwegian specialist in the presence of a Polish interpreter.

In case of courses for Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians the problem is more complicated. Firstly, the number of workers from the Baltic Republics is not as large

as the number of Polish workers. Secondly, in each of the agencies, which granted interviews to the author, at least one office worker was from the Poland, who could be used as a trainee or interpreter. The work agency did not have to hire an additional special interpreter. Courses in the languages of the Baltic Countries are also available but not so often. There are two solutions which were most often pointed out: the course was in Lithuanian or Russian, because many workers from Latvia and Estonia declared to have an excellent or at least good knowledge of Russian.

The average course lasted for 2-3 hours. When the course was in Polish or other native language, it lasted 1 hour or 1, 5 hour. If the course was purchased in Norwegian with a Polish interpreter, the time of course used to be twice as long. Many companies also require specialized training courses. These courses lasted one working day – that is 8 hours.

The information in written form is also usually given in Polish or other foreign language.

"In this case, companies are very cautious. All internal routines and rules have to be translated into Polish or other language. I could say that in this respect it is the employer that is the strictest, not the agency".

Consultant from work agency, Stavanger, 12 July 2010,

Not even half of the people responded that they were definitely familiar with the HSE regulations. One third of the people responded that they were more/less familiar with the HSE regulations. Almost everyone who responded that they were definitely familiar with HSE routines had participated in a course in their native language. One person, who participated in a health and safety course conducted in English / Norwegian, claimed that he was familiar with HSE regulations. This person has lived in Norway for more than 5 years and declared a good knowledge of Norwegian.

Most people who participated in HSE courses in English and / or Norwegian

replied that they were more / less familiar with HSE routines. One worker, who replied that in general he was not familiar with the safety rules, was from the group which declared no knowledge of English or Norwegian. This person also participated in the health and safety course conducted in the Norwegian language and / or English. The person participated in a course which was held in languages which the person did not understand. That person was from Lithuania and had worked in Norway for less than 6 months. It is important to note that because one can conclude that people who have had health and safety courses in their native language, agreed that they were more likely or definitely familiar with the health and safety rules at their work. The person, who did not know the language, declared also that he did not know the safety rules at all.

In case of the question: are you familiar with your rights as a worker? The majority replied yes. Here, the author asked respondents about the sources of information. The following answers were given: other colleagues, friends, trade unions, NAV and other public institutions. Nobody mentioned the employer.

Could that mean that employers do not inform their employees about their rights?

"Not exactly. The role of work agencies is to assist and help with finding work, house etc. A worker from a work agency welcomes the employee at the airport, helps with compulsory medical examination, etc. Also he assists in the necessary procedures, such as the Office for Migration and the Population Registration. Of course, we try to help with others specific problems. In Stavanger however, there are other institutions which were established to help or inform employees about taxes, wages and the system of holiday or overtime payment.

Consultant from work agency, Stavanger, 12 July 2010

According to the FAFO report, which also shows the possible need for issues / problems addressed to the Trade Unions, the results showed that (workers could select more than one option):

- 67% do not see the need for assistance from the Trade Unions,

- 16% had a problem with a payment
- 16% of the work during the overtime,
- 12% of the housing problems,
- 7% of insurance,
- 5% with access to health services
- 5% of the contract of employment, and only 3% of the soliciting on workplace safety and health, (FAFO, 2007, p.87)

The next question was: Have you experienced any difficulties due to lack of language skills?

Here, only two of respondents answered that they did not. Seven of them answered: sometimes and four claimed that: yes. There was one open question added to this question: If, yes, could you describe what kind of difficulties?

The answers which were given were: not understanding the commands, bad execution of tasks e.g. the need of wearing helmet or gloves, not understanding other workers.

Here the author decided to quote two of the interviewees.

The first one told a story when he was working as a temporary canteen help.

"I worked with washing the dishes at a canteen. I worked as a temporary worker and my agency just called me one day and said that I was supposed to go and work at one canteen on Hundvåg. When I came there, it appeared that I would work alone with another Thai woman. While I was washing the dishes something happened to the machine and suddenly the water started to gush. I did not know what to do so I ran to this Thai woman to explain her everything and get some help. She was busy with cooking the food for workers. I could

not explain anything. She realized only when she saw a lot of water coming to the kitchen hall. She fixed the problem within five minutes. What if it had happened while I was alone? Many time I worked alone in canteen..."

The second quotation is also from a worker who worked as a temporary canteen help.

"Every day after work we had to clean all the coffee machines. The parts of the machines were quite large and heavy and we had to put them into washing and carry back to the canteen. Once I slipped and fell with that part on the floor. I fell on the right elbow. Immediately I felt a terrible pain. I was afraid to complain and the working day was almost over. I went home and took some pain killers. The next morning the pain was even stronger and there was a visible swelling on my elbow. I called my work agency and said that I would not come to work, but I could not explain why. The agency did not want to pay me for this day even though I had right to sick pay and they told me that I had to treat my work with more respect, probably they thought that it was a hangover or I was being just lazy that day. "

These two examples show some aspects. The main one was how easy a worker could be misunderstood and the consequences could be that the worker did not receive information on how to use the machine and he could not warn about accidents the others. Moreover, the worker which had an accident at work could not report it and could not get his rights.

There comes another issue which is the lack of knowledge of the language that caused:

- The worker did not understand the routines and training if those were given,
- The worker could not inform about the danger,

The first man had a concrete problem with the machine and he noticed a concrete danger. The level of the water was rising and he did not know what to do because he did not know how the machine worked. He ran to warn the other worker with more knowledge about the problem, but the other worker could not understand him. The danger was actually recognized but an actor could not do anything about that. Let us

imagine the situation: the worker received a short training about the machine, how it works and what to do in case of problems. Then he could immediately react himself. The other issue is who should train him, if the company that ordered a worker relied on work agency to send the worker with minimum language skills and having gone through a training. It is not a drastic example but it shows exactly that lack of communication, lack of knowledge of the language, lack of training could be a problem at a working place.

The other example shows the situation where the worker is not properly informed about his rights. He could not explain that he was ill; he did not get his sick pay even though he reported the accident and illness. The problem is that nobody understood him.

The next question was: Have you been provided any written information in your native language? Here almost all of the respondents answered yes. Also all of the work agencies declared that kind information was issued.

The following kinds of information were mentioned:

- brochures,
- regulations with translation,
- work contracts,
- general informations,
- informations about trade unions,
- information about tax reduction card,

The author needs to point here that not all of the information was provided by the employers. Most of them used the brochures taken from public services e.g. Tax Office, Labour Union or Labour Authorities. It is possible that e.g. brochures (mentioned in chapter 4) were just forwarded. This is of course not any negative issue but it still shows that all actions of public authorities and / or trade unions were absolutely needed.

The next question was: Do you know what to do in case of danger at your work place?

Almost all of respondents here answered that positively. This was a bit surprising for

the author of the thesis. The two examples of accidents which were mentioned before showed something different. Those two workers did not know what to do in case of an accident. They acted instinctively. Also all of my respondents answer that they acted instinctively. Nine of them said that they followed instructions and only 6 of them followed the routines which they had learned on the course. The instinct can be described as an unlearned response characteristic of the members of a given species and tendency of disposition to respond in a particular manner that is characteristic of a particular species. This disposition is presumed underpinning of the observed behavior (A..S. Reber, E. S. Reber, s. 357). Of course, in case of danger it is hard to follow the routines which one had learned during any course. Most likely people panic and just follow the instinct. Especially while, as we saw before, most of them just do not know what to do and how to act in case of hazards and dangers.

One of my respondents simply said:

"Of course, if it's a fire then we just run. There is no time to think what was said during the course or trying to find papers with rules in Polish (laughs)"

Like we could see the results of the last question almost none of workers from working agencies knew who was responsible for HSE at their work. The workers at the Norwegian companies, which were not familiar with Norwegian language, did not know that either. The workers of foreign companies did not know that at all.

The explanation might be simple: the workers from work agencies are being sent to different work places as hired workers. One worker could work 5 days a week on 5 different constructions being hired by different companies. They do not know very often where they will work the day after and they 'just do their work'. It is hard in that case to expect that the worker will become familiar with his workplace at all and especially with the fact of person who is responsible for HSE routines. The same applies to constructions workers hired from foreign companies. If a foreign contractor sends his/her own workers to a Norwegian contractor for e.g. two weeks, it is hard to expect that those workers (as it was proven without any knowledge of the language) would get familiar with their working place either. All the respondents who answered positively to the question were hired by a Norwegian company, mostly for the period of 1-3 years. After that period a worker could be familiar with the environment at his

work, colleagues, routines and might know who is who at his work place.

5. Discussion

At this point we have quite a broad and detailed view of the safety work in relation to knowledge of languages and HSE rules.

One of the problems which have appeared, concerns perception of the role of HSE courses. As we could see the way how the courses were conducted (with or without translation) did not always work. Two groups here could be defined: employers and employees. The employers of course admitted that the HSE courses were contributed in many possible variations and even languages. Also many written regulations in many languages were available. On the other side the employees said that of course they did receive some kind of training, sometimes in their native languages, but as they claimed it was not enough. Like one of respondents said: we had some short course, we needed to sign papers to confirm and that and that's all. The company did their duty. We didn't learn anything useful.

It was mentioned in chapter before that some of language issues related dangers were written instructions not effective and communication about safety not effective enough and information not understood. If the theory and examples from the interview are compared the results might be clear: even though the courses and written instruction exists they are more likely not understood. The main problem might be again lack of communication. In this case according to the Swiss cheese model of human error causation presented by Reason the communication and coordination break down in the first place. These errors are not constant and while one concentrate on issue how humans and organizations commit errors than those incidents could be prevented while causes are understood. The errors could be preventing by proper training and supervision.

The problem of foreign language due to safety is definitely simple to describe. It is not a question of illiteracy, poor writing, reading etc. but the problem of just not understanding other language or poor translation (P. Lindhout, 2009, p. 248).

The language issue appeared also to be very important. As it was mentioned in a chapter with findings, the people who had health and safety courses in their native

language, agreed that they were more likely or definitely familiar with the health and safety rules at their work. Many employers and employees confirmed that the courses were provided at least in Polish or with the translation (presence of an interpreter). Probably that is why the Polish workers could understand more about HSE regulations than the respondents from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. That would mean that courses in mother-tongue are a good solution. At least workers could understand general routines and a theory. However most of them just act instinctively in case of danger. It is important to notice that many people just act like that in case of danger.

It would be good to mention once again two examples from chapter with findings. Both of the examples show the consequences of lack of language, lack of knowledge about HSE and worker's rights and lack of responsibility of work agencies at some point.

Almost all of the employers claimed that they did not offer language courses to the employees. Also most of them claimed that those kinds of courses were offered some years ago. The cost of the courses was one reason to stop them.

Another important problem was reporting the accidents. Employers agreed that they did not notice any serious cases and accidents at their work places. At the same time, workers agreed that there were some accidents but they did not report them. There were two reasons to that: workers could not speak the language to express themselves e.g. that they were sick or harmed and workers were afraid of losing their work. I would call this situation a vicious circle. Let us follow the example: the worker cannot speak the language and is sent to work, an accident happens because the language barriers, the worker can't inform the employer about accident because he can't the language or/and he is afraid of losing work, the employer does not know about the accident so thinks that the situation is under control and does not report anything to Labour Inspection. As a result he/she does not see the need of having a language course or HSE course in the native language of the employees since in he/she thinks the HSE course in Norwegian or English was completely understandable.

Of course, most of employers declared the need for HSE course in other languages. Not many of them declared need for a Norwegian course. Some of them seem to ignore the problem at all. It is good to notice that a high and advanced level of HSE

requires high level of language skills. The risk is of course higher when people work together and do not understand each other.

The role of an interpreter is also quite doubtful. Here is an example from FAFO report about a company that hired interpreters:

Even though the interpreters were hired, there were still not enough of them to participate in all of situations which could happen during the day of work. (FAFO, 2007:32, p. 83)

As it was defined in the beginning of the thesis, the communication problem appears when the vocabulary in the language is not shared between the agents. Communication, especially in the sector of industry and construction, is very important since many workers are involved. FAFO reports show that Polish workers were involved in the most dangerous works (p. 87). Surprisingly, most of the workers felt safe during the work although most of them did not understand the danger and HSE rules.

This reminds me of a quotation from one of the announcements in newspaper:

“I’m looking for cheap Polish workers”

In that sense “cheap” might be understood not only in relation to wages but also in relation to working conditions and respect for workers’ right. As it was mentioned earlier, Norwegian workers would never agree to working in such conditions as Polish workers do.

6. Finally conclusions

According to statistics only 2% of workers from Eastern Europe are able to communicate in one of the Scandinavian language (FAFO, 2006, p.16). The lack of language was pointed as the main problem with understanding principles of safety and ignoring of workers' rights and obligations (FAFO, 2007, p. 70). The language could be the cause of error like the author mentioned before – without the knowledge of language the worker will not understand a safety regulation. The written information are not always enough and courses in native language are rather provisionally and occasionally. As an example we could mentioned that all respondents answered that the safety course was conducted but most of them act instinctively in case of danger.

The most positive action seems to be contributed from our third group of actors, which are public offices and other organizations. The author mentioned a couple of examples with the many multi-language offices which provided help to workers (SUA), many events, like lectures and free language courses were provided to Polish workers by IOM. More and more people are visiting Labour Inspection with more and more problems.

Like the worker from SUA said:

Finally, they talk! They come with many problems and many of them had never realized that they had actually been working in illegal conditions and for illegal wages.

SUA Stavanger, 4th june, 2010,

Certain problems were pointed out in this paper. The first one was that the workers from Poland and the Baltic Republics do not understand Norwegian. The second one implied that reported accidents at work among workers from Poland increased significantly (increased by 77%). The third one was that Polish workers suffered from insufficient abilities to understand Norwegian not only because of the prevention of accidents but also because of the possibility to claim their rights guaranteed by the Norwegian law.

Accidents can come in many sizes and forms. Some are really simple and some are complex. We might not prevent all of them but we could provide the possibility of

positive changes in this field. According to the Swiss Model where slices represent errors – those errors could be prevented by proper training. In this case it would be language training or training in a native language. The interviewers fortunately mentioned simple examples of the accidents.

Public services in Norway offer a wide range of information in many foreign languages. Most of the information is provided in English and Polish but Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian languages are also used. All the institutions visited by the author have hired interpreters..

Public services in Norway offer a wide range of information in many foreign languages mainly in English and Polish but also in Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian. All the institutions visited by the author have hired interpreters.

One of the subjects interviewed by the author said:

"Previously I worked a bit in England, Scotland and Ireland. After arriving in Norway I was pleasantly surprised that in the office of registration (National register) there was a person speaking in my native language. I could never imagine such a situation in England and certainly not in my home country (laughs)"

Polish, male, under 25 years old, Stavanger 17 April 2010

To summarize, the problem with not knowing the language exists among the foreign workers in Norway. On the positive side, one needs to admit that many state agencies, nongovernmental organizations and also employers seem to be aware of the difficulties they are facing. According to the author of this thesis, state agencies play the most crucial role in helping to solve foreigners' language problems; their multilingual services offer is truly amazing. With that in mind, one needs to agree that not all of the workers coming to Norway are willing to learn the language; many people are here on temporary contracts and they do not want and do not need to know Norwegian.

In regard to the problem of safety and language proficiency, it was the subject of many researches and studies (for instance FAFO investigations). It is beyond doubt that the problem does exist.

This dissertation aims to examine the role of state agencies, non-governmental organizations and employers in regard to information and prevention measures that they provide. The methodology of the research is based on the literature review, statistics analysis and authors observation. The interviews that the author conducted do not exhaust all possible conclusions and provide, understandably, subjective and personal views on a topic. The present conclusions are thus a starting point for further studies.

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Attachments

1. Interview / outline of the main questions - English

Hello,

I am Master student at the University in Stavanger, majoring in Public Safety. I am conducting a research concerning Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian people living in Stavanger region. I would like to get more information on language barriers according to safety regulations in Norway. Thank you for taking part in my research. Your answers from the interview are fully confidential. It is a key factor in my research,

Margarita Lankina

Gender Male Female

Age

Education

Nationality Lithuania Poland Estonia

Latvia

Occupation

How long have you been staying in Norway?

Employment sector

Knowledge of English

Knowledge of Norwegian

Has your employer provided Norwegian course to employees?

Has your employer provided HSE course to employees?

If yes in which language was it contributed?

Are you familiar with HSE routines at your work?

Are you familiar with your rights as a worker?

Have you experienced any difficulties due to lack of language skills?

If yes, could you describe what kind of difficulties?

Have you been provided any written information in your native language?

If yes, could you specify what kind of information it was?

Do you know what to do in case of danger at your work place?

If yes, how do you act then?

Do you know who is responsible for HSE at your work?

Comments

2. Interview – polish version

Jestem studentka studiów magisterskich na Uniwersytecie w Stavanger, która kończy Bezpieczeństwo Publiczne. Przeprowadzam prace na temat Polaków, Litwinów, Łotyszów i Estonczyków mieszkających w regionie Stavanger. Chciałabym zbierać więcej informacji na temat barier językowych w odniesieniu do regulacji BHP. Dziękuję za udział w moim badaniu. Twoje odpowiedzi w wywiadzie są w pełni poufne.

Margarita Lankina

Plec: Mężczyzna Kobieta

Wiek:

Wykształcenie:

Narodowość: Litwa Polska Estonia Łotwa

Zawód:

Jak długo mieszkasz w Norwegii

Sektor zatrudnienia

Znajomość języka angielskiego

Znajomość języka norweskiego

Czy twój pracodawca zaoferował kurs języka norweskiego?

Czy twój pracodawca zaoferował kurs BHP?

Jesli tak w jakim jezyku kurs byl prowadzony?

Czy jestes zaznajomiony z przepisami BHP w twojej firmie?

Czy jestes zaznajomiony z Twoimi prawami pracowniczymi?

Czy doswiadczyles jakis nieprzyjemnosci w zwiazku z brakiem znajmosci jezyka?

Jesli tak, czy mozesz opisac z jakimi?

Czy dostales informacje napisane w twoim jezyku ojczystym?

Jezeli tak czy moglbys opisac jakiego rodzaju informacje?

Czy wiesz co zrobic w przypadku zagrozenia w twojej pracy?

Jezeli tak, jak zachowujesz sie wtedy?

Czy wiesz kto jest odpowiedzialny za BHP w twojej pracy?

Ewentualne
komentarze

3. Interview – lithuanian version

Sveiki,

esu Stavangerio universiteto, magistro laipsnio, visuomenės saugos studijų krypties studentė. Atlieku tyrimą, Stavangerio regione gyvenančių asmenų iš Lenkijos, Lietuvos, Latvijos ir Estijos tarpe. Siekdama įveikti įvairių kalbų kliūtis, sudariau šią anketą lietuvių kalba ir norėčiau gauti daugiau informacijos apie saugos taisykles. Dėkoju Jums, kad esate mano tyrimo dalimi. Jūsų atsakymai yra slapti, kadangi konfidencialumas yra vienas pagrindinių šio tyrimo faktorių.

Pagarbiai, Margarita Lankina

Jūsų lytis: vyr. mot.

Jūsų amžiaus grupė

Jūsų išsilavinimas: Lietuvos Lenkijos
 Estijos Latvijos

Jūsų darbo padėtis_

Kiek laiko jau esate Norvegijoje?:

Anglų kalbos žinios:

Norvegų kalbos žinios:

Ar Jūsų darbdavys suteikė galimybę darbuotojams mokytis norvegų kalbos?

Ar Jūsų darbdavys pravedė Jums darbo saugos mokymus?

Jei taip, kokia kalba tai buvo atlikta?

Ar esate susipažinę su darbo saugos taisyklėmis darbo vietoje?

Ar žinote savo kaip darbuotojo teises?

Ar patyrėte kokių nors sunkumų dėl kalbos nemokėjimo?

Jei taip, prašome nurodyti kokie tai buvo sunkumai?

Ar Jums buvo suteikta kokia nors informacija Jūsų gimtąja kalba?

Jei taip, prašome nurodyti kokia tai buvo informacija?

Ar Jūs žinote ką reikia daryti Jūsų darbo vietoje pavojaus atveju?

Jei taip, kaip Jūs elgtumėtės:

Ar Jūs žinote kas Jūsų darbe yra atsakingas už darbų sauga?

Papildomi komentarai

4. Interview – russian version

Здравствуйте,

Я прохожу обучение по мастер программе, специализация "Общественная безопасность", в университете г.Ставангер. Я провожу исследование, касающееся польских, литовских, латвийских и эстонских рабочих, проживающих в г.Ставангер и окрестностях. Я бы хотела собрать больше информации, касающейся языковых проблем в регулировании общественной безопасности Норвегии. Спасибо вам за ваше согласие стать участником моего исследования. Ваши ответы полностью конфиденциальны и являются ключевым фактором исследовательской работы.

С уважением,

Маргарита Ланкина

Пол: Мужчина Женщина

Возраст

Образование

Национальность

Профессия/род деятельности:

Как давно Вы находитесь в Норвегии?

Владение английским языком?

Владение норвежским языком?

Ваш работодатель предоставляет Вам возможность посещения курсов норвежского языка?

Ваш работодатель проводит курсы по безопасности на производстве для всех работников?

Если да, то на каком языке проводятся эти курсы?

Знакомы ли Вам меры по безопасности на производстве?

Хорошо ли вы знакомы со своими правами работника?

Сталкивались ли Вы с какими-то сложностями на работе по причине непонимания языка?

Если да, не могли бы вы описать, с какими именно трудностями Вам приходилось сталкиваться?

Была ли Вам предоставлена какая-либо информация на Вашем родном языке?

Если да, уточните, пожалуйста, какая именно информация?.....

Знаете ли Вы, что необходимо делать в случае возникновения опасности на рабочем месте?

Если да, как вы будете действовать?

Знаете ли Вы ответственного за общественную безопасность на Вашем рабочем месте?

Комментарии

.....