Labour mobility in shipbuilding in the European market

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Shipping Off Labour: Staffing Strategies in Globalized Workplaces

Norway	Germany	Italy	Poland	Romania	EU-level
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- Differentiation: high/low cost; labour regime typologies
- Commonality: shipbuilding as a strategic industry; horizontal and vertical segmented production process
- 2020-2024

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Methods

- DE, IT, NO – stronger social regulation, higher labor costs, manage whole production chain
- PL, RO –lower regulation, labor costs, suppliers to Western yards
- Between and within analysis

	Employers and their representatives	Workers and their representatives	Experts	Total
Italy	1	32	2	35
Germany	1	7	2	10
Norway	17	19	9	45
Poland	7	2	1	10
Romania	3	5	3	11
Total	27	62	15	**111**

Two-way mobility

How have yards' production and staffing strategies changed in response to global trends and European economic and social integration?

- Production has moved (company takeovers or suppliers)
  - 1985-1995 – Restructuring and flexibilization → outsourcing
  - 1995-2004 – Transnationalisation → offshoring and FDI
- Labor has moved (via posting/temporary or TCNs)
  - Since 2004– Labour immigration
    - Crises and further consolidation

	Labor
Italy	Bangladeshi workers recruited in the local labor market, employed via local subcontractors, EU posting
Norway	Workers from Romania and Poland employed via local subcontractors, local skill shortage and pressure to lower costs
Germany	Polish and Romanian workers employed via subcontractors, local skill shortage and pressure to lower costs
Romania	Vietnamese workers employed via subcontractors, Romanian emigration, little return migration
Poland	Previously Ukrainian workers, Polish emigration, little return migration

Opportunities and constraints under free movement in Europe

Mobility	Opportunities	Constraints
Of capital (MNC)	EWC & union coalitions	production mobility to east – west union competition for production (threat or relocation to lower cost countries) – move to insource labor to lower costs
Of workers (migration)	EU co-ordination Migrant services/unionisation Bilateral/multilateral co-operation Information exchange ['Exit' (individual) workers to other countries to get higher wages] => leads to labour shortages	Migrant workers - more likely to accept lower T&C, including informal/illegal practices - less likely to be unionised - little security during crisis
Of services (posting, self-employment, remote services)	Monitoring of PWD	Similar as above - posted workers east-west accept lower T&C & unlikely to be unionised in receiving countries -little security during crisis

In how far do national institutions matter?

Ro and Po: Despite weaker institutional resources, large East-West wage gap

→ increased wages + job security for DIRECT employees + first tier indirect employees

Norway and Germany:

- sectoral CA ensures high wages and social benefits for direct workers and peripheral workers

→ job insecurity increased despite strong(er) institutional resources and replacement of local workers with migrant workers + less production/design

- Italy: sectoral and company CAs for direct employees, while ‘Hyper-flexible’ model

Opportunities and threats

- Integration of production and labor mobility affects the whole workforce
- Labor mobility is used as a cost advantage but still threatens job security of direct employees
- Labor mobilities offers opportunities (exit, higher pay, new skills) but often comes with insecurity and acceptance for lower T&C
- Ongoing analysis
- Project conference, Brussels 2024 autumn