

## **Social dialogue at the workplace during the pandemic**

*Friday, September 17, 2021 9:00 AM (30 minutes)*

The current COVID-19-pandemic sends negative and unexpected shocks to the labour markets. The consequences of the corona-pandemic for the labour markets are not yet to be overseen, but the negative effects will be serious and long lasting. A central feature of the Nordic model is the collaboration between workers and employers at the workplace. The model has proven to be particularly effective during crises (Dølvik et al. 2014). By involving employees and their representatives in crisis management, the outcome are expected to be less devastating for business and more inclusive for the workers than without such involvement. The main question in this paper is how the social dialogue at the workplaces have functioned under extraordinary conditions. During surveys among shop stewards in both private and public sector, we have mapped the situation in large parts of the Norwegian labour market. We asked how the shop stewards have experienced the formal and informal participation during the pandemic, their sense of influence on important decisions and how they judge the employers' handling of this extreme situation. In many ways, the local social dialogue has been put on its'worst stress test ever. The results show a remarkable stability in terms of cooperation, and even some of the shop stewards label their relationship to the employer as better than before the pandemic (Trygstad & Andersen 2021). We want to elaborate the importance of social dialogue in times of crisis and discuss why the long-standing trust between the parties is so persistent.

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