

EUROPEAN PROJECT ON SAFETY REPS (EPSARE)



Background

- Safety Reps are one of the most diffused forms of workers' representation at workplace level although there are no systematic statistical data in the EU
- Participation of safety reps have a positive impact in the health and safety activities at the workplace level
- It is not known adequately and systematically which factors (e.g., training, information, union strategies, legal rights, support by public authorities, etc) may result in a positive impact of safety reps action in the health and safety
- There is a lack of knowledge and debate (both scientific and political) on the factors and conditions that make safety reps an important asset in work environment strategies and interventions

Background

- There is **already a lot of research on the legal framework** for safety reps activities
- In the field of health and safety, **there is an overall lack of attention to the analysis of effective interventions.** (Such a concern is not limited, however, to safety reps but also with preventive services, company management and labour inspection).
- Indeed, **systematic knowledge on all those conditions or factors including safety reps action is still lacking** to a large extent.

Background

- Research on effective intervention of safety reps seems quite **difficult** for at least the **following reasons**:
 1. The **definition** of having safety reps and their **quantification** at workplace level is not straightforward
 2. The existence of **good data** to investigate links between safety reps and outcomes is scarce
 3. The **selection, measurement and time period of occupational indicators** to assess the **effectiveness** of interventions by safety reps is not easy
 4. The **analysis and interpretation** of the impact of safety reps on outcomes is complicated
 5. The **health outcomes** that most likely should be taken into account for measuring **effectiveness of interventions** are probably not available
 6. The **construction and interpretation of levels of causality** between preventive actions and health outcomes is also quite difficult

What are the two broad goals of the project?

1. To achieve several **general objectives**
2. To develop a broader **social and occupational agenda**

1. To achieve several project's **general objectives**

- To describe and assess the effectiveness of safety reps intervention at the workplace level in selected countries
- To compare the characteristics (e.g., differences, similarities, advantages, disadvantages, etc.) of these interventions across countries
- To identify the preconditions for effective interventions and to elaborate methodological proposals for a better assessment of the safety reps intervention

2. To develop a broader **social and occupational agenda**

- To contribute to a **better knowledge** of the importance of having more democracy at the workplace to improve workers' health.
- To contribute to the **political debate** on the legal framework of workplace representation at the EU and national levels.
- To contribute to a **broader debate on the new needs for workers representation** in a fragmented flexible labour market.
- To build a **network of trade unionists and social sciences researchers** in that field.
- To develop **practical tools** useful for trade unionists, prevention practitioners and researchers

Some features of a modular project

General project

- Approach: Mainly descriptive. It will compare main characteristics across a number of European countries
- Methods: Review of literature, secondary data analysis, interviews to key informants
- Resources: Funded by SALTSA
- Other points: A preliminary index is already done

National projects

- Approach: It will depend on specific occupational health problems and the availability of data, resources and priorities in each country.
- Methods: Secondary data, qualitative studies, case studies... ??
- Resources: Self-funded by each country
- Other points: The data produced are an important input for the central comparative project.

Main points to be discussed by the CORE GROUP

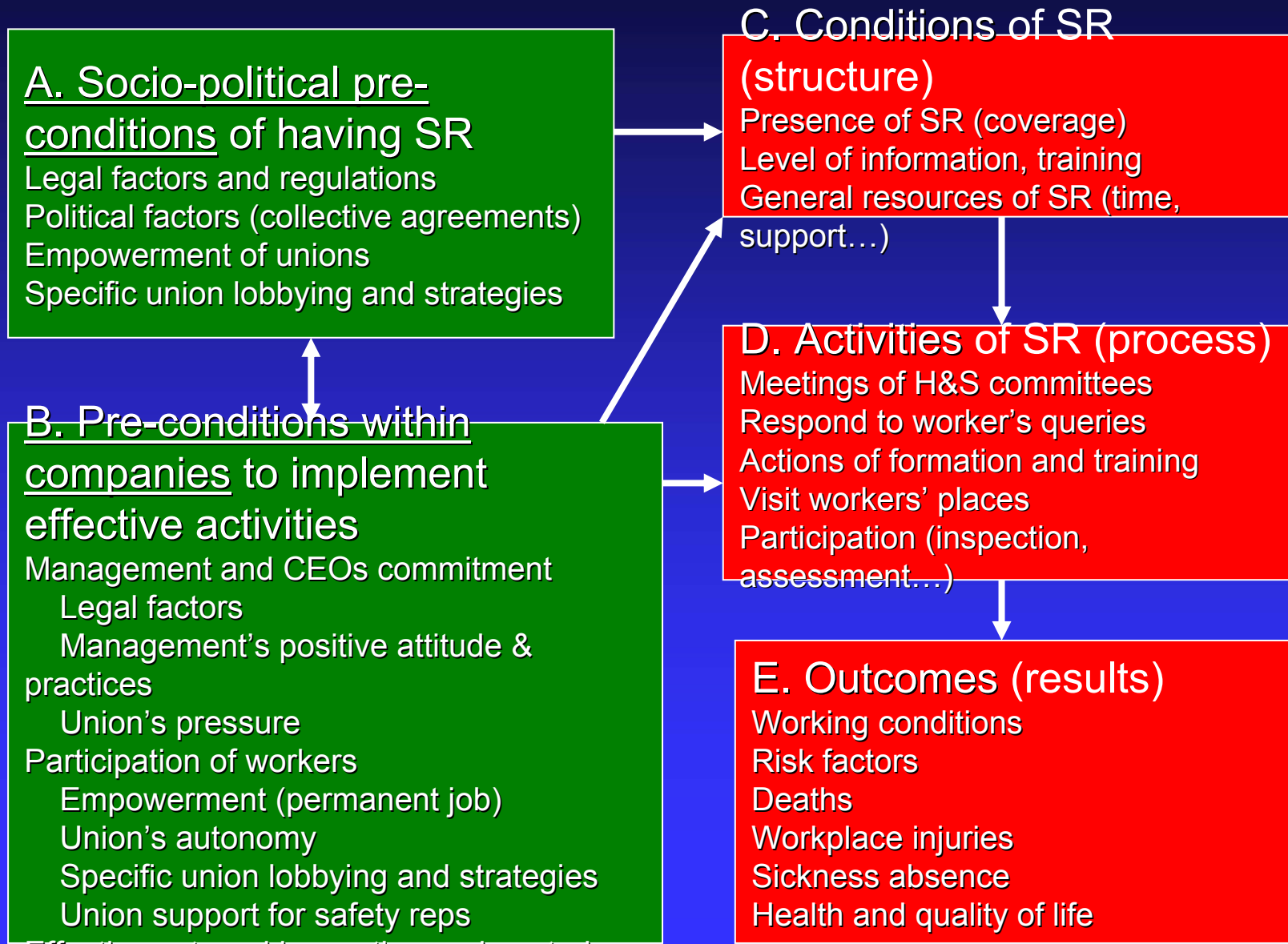
1. The concepts to define safety reps
2. The causal theories, mechanisms and pathways by which safety reps can improve health and safety
3. The best indicators (or at least good proxies) to assess how effective are the safety reps actions
4. Methodological principles for a systematic data collection and case studies of the national reports
5. Methodological criteria for searching scientific studies and grey literature
6. Questionnaire to interview key informants

1. The **concept** to define safety reps

- For the purpose of this study, we consider safety reps as: workers in a company with a specific mandate to represent workers' interest in health and safety issues. They can be elected by the workforce or appointed by trade unions. Their mandate confers them some specific rights (information, consultation, etc...) by law or by collective agreement.



2. Theoretical framework to assess the effectiveness of SR actions on health and safety



3. Potential **dimensions** and **indicators** to assess how effective are the actions of safety reps (SR)

- A. Socio-political pre-conditions of having SR
- B. Pre-conditions to implement activities within companies
- C. Conditions of SR (structure)
- D. Activities of SR (process)
- E. Outcomes (results)

assess how effective are the actions of safety reps (SR)

A. Socio-political pre-conditions to have SR:

- ◆ Legal factors
 - Laws and regulations
- ◆ Political factors
 - Collective agreements
 - Union's election system
 - Number of regional delegates (proxy in Spain)
- ◆ Empowerment (strength) of unions
 - Affiliation and representation
 - Collective agreement coverage
 - Number of hours worked per person (proxy)
 - Salaries per hour in firm (proxy)
 - Percentage of temporary workers (proxy)
- ◆ Existence of specific union lobbying and strategies to improve health and safety

B. Pre-conditions to implement SR activities within companies

- ◆ Management and CEOs **commitment**
 - Legal and political factors
 - Management good practices
 - Union's pressure
 - collective agreements
 - union's political power
- ◆ **Participation** of workers
 - Empowerment of the workforce
 - Union Autonomy
 - Specific Union lobbying and strategies
 - Union support for safety reps
- ◆ Effective external **inspection** and **control**

C. Conditions (structure):

- ◆ **Presence** of SR
 - Percentages of coverage in the active population by country, region, sector
- ◆ **Level of information, training**
 - Courses
 - Experience
- ◆ **General resources** of SR
 - Availability of time by SR
 - Union's specific support
 -

D. Activities (process):

- ◆ Attend meetings of health and safety committees
- ◆ Respond to workers' queries
- ◆ Actions of formation and training
- ◆ Visit worker's places
- ◆ Participation in:
 - Inspection of working conditions
 - Workplace injuries reduction
 - Companies' risk assessment
 - Companies' prevention plan

E. Outcomes (results):

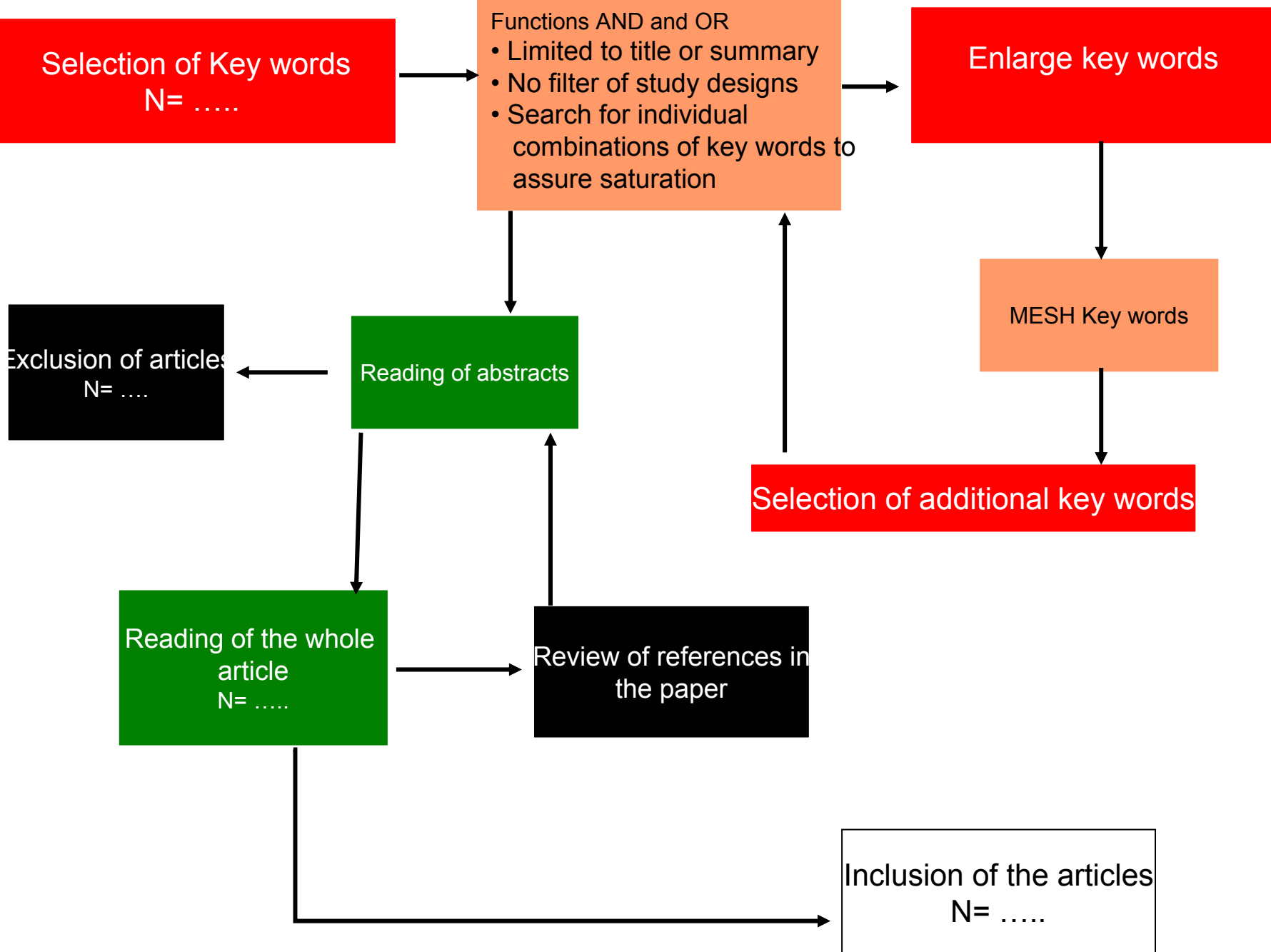
- ◆ Improvement of working conditions
- ◆ Prevention of risk factors
- ◆ Reduction of deaths
- ◆ Reduction of workplace injuries
- ◆ Reduction of sickness absence
- ◆ Improvement of health and quality of life

4. Methodological principles for a systematic collection of information, data and case studies of the national reports

- Similar **definition** of safety reps (take both legal and real perspective)
- Select **information** available following a commonly agreed **theoretical approach**
- Agreement on similar **indicators** that are valid and reliable

5. Methodological criteria for searching scientific studies and grey literature

- Key words
- Algorithm procedure
 - ◆ Mesh words
 - ◆ Reading of abstracts
 - ◆ Exclusion and inclusion
 - ◆ Reading of whole article



6. Questionnaire to interview key informants

- Need to make a list of potential participants
 - ◆ Diversity countries
 - ◆ Diversity persons
 - ◆ Diversity sectors
- Need to make a list of potential important questions

Analyses of European Surveys

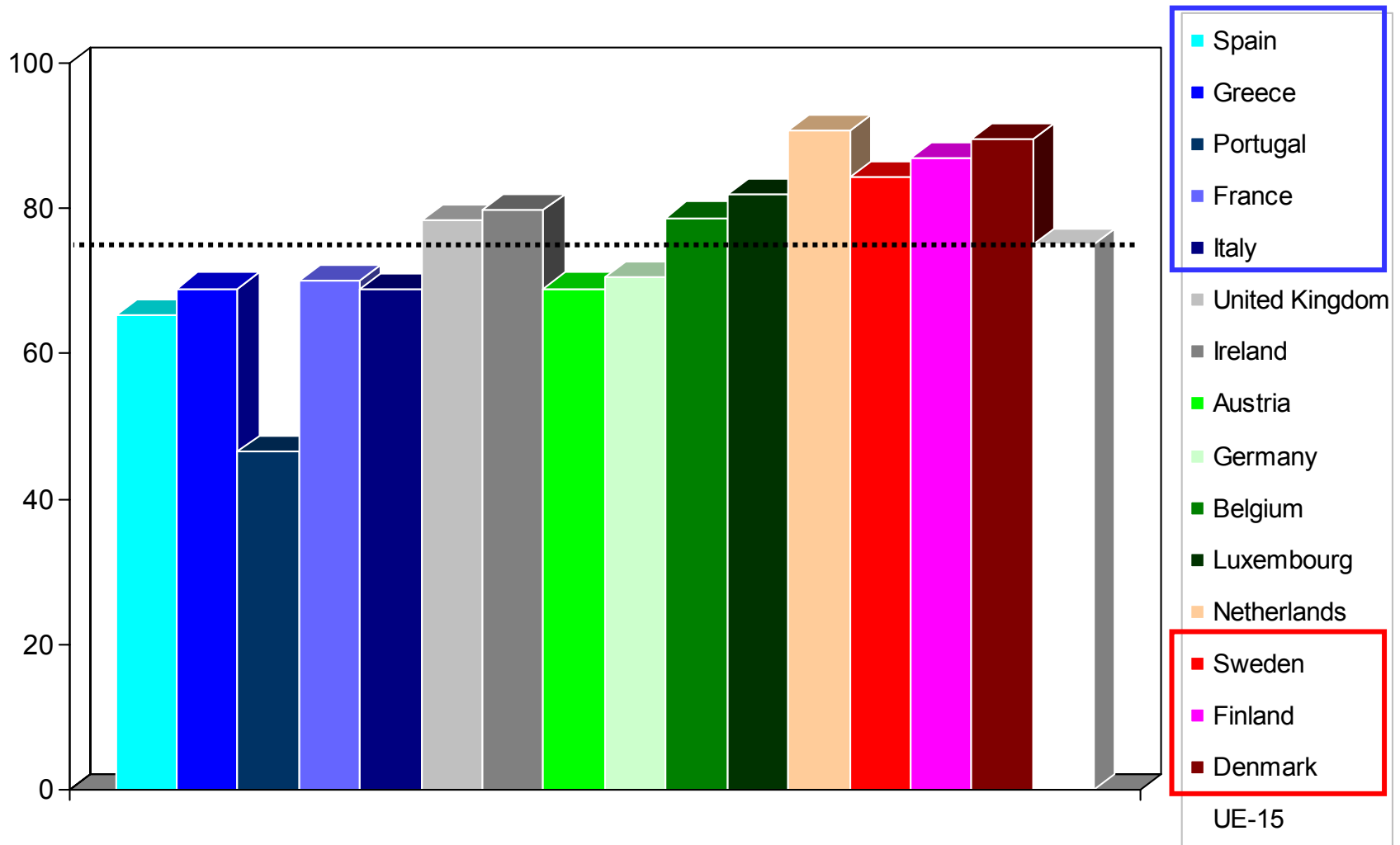
■ Third European Survey on working conditions (2000)

- ◆ Q30a. Within your workplace, are you able to discuss... ?
 - your working conditions in general
 - the organisation of your work when changes take place
- ◆ Q30b. Do these exchanges of views take place.... ?
 - With your colleagues
 - With your superiors
 - With staff representatives
 - With outside experts
 - On a regular basis
 - On a formal basis

Analyses of European Surveys

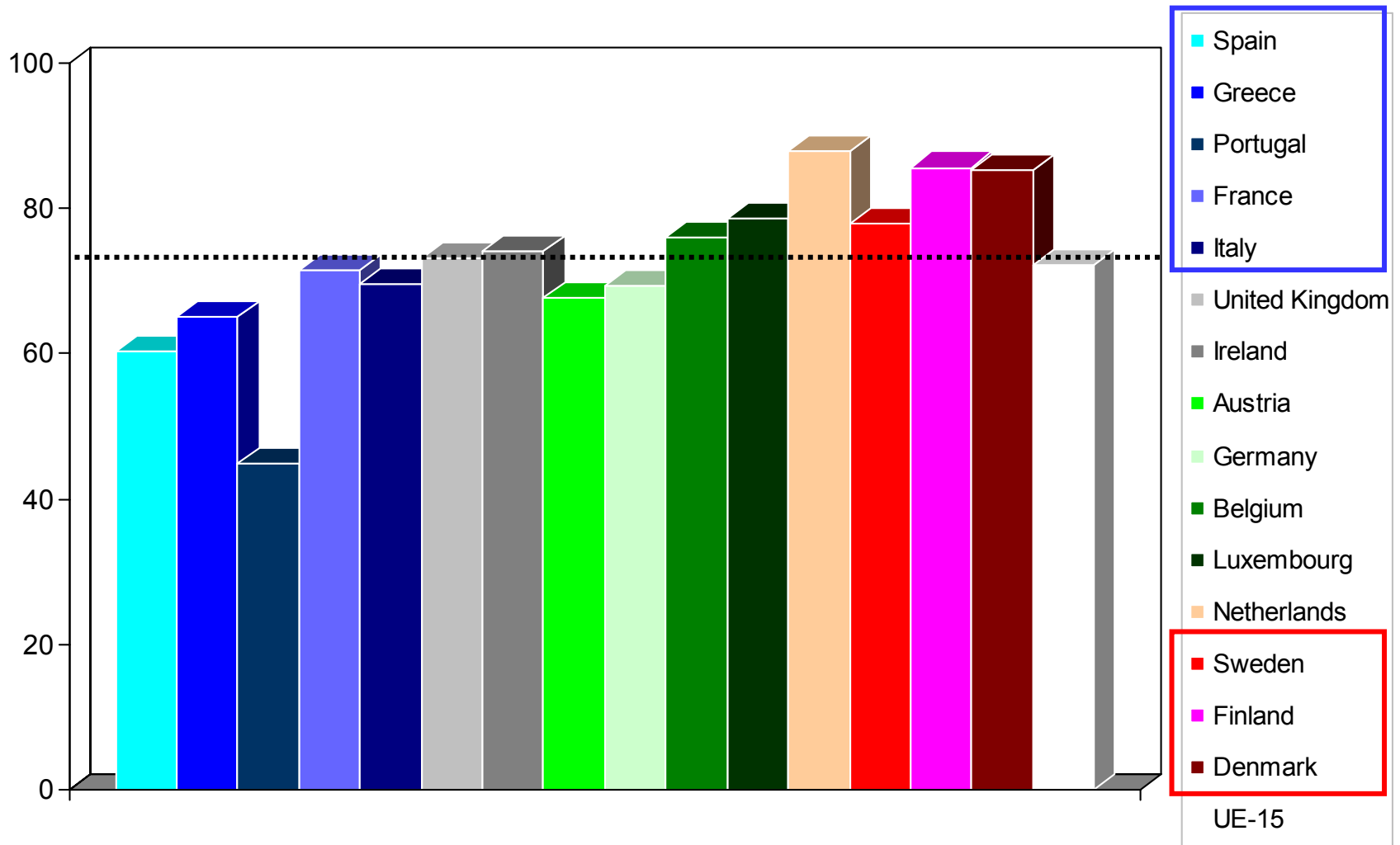
- Third European Survey on working conditions (2000)
 - ◆ Q30c. And, do these exchanges of views lead to improvements.... ?
 - At your own personal workplace
 - In your office or factory
 - In the organisation as a whole
 - ◆ QEF20. How often are you involved in any of the following activities outside work?
 - Political/trade union activity

Within your workplace, are you able to discuss your working conditions in general? (percentages)



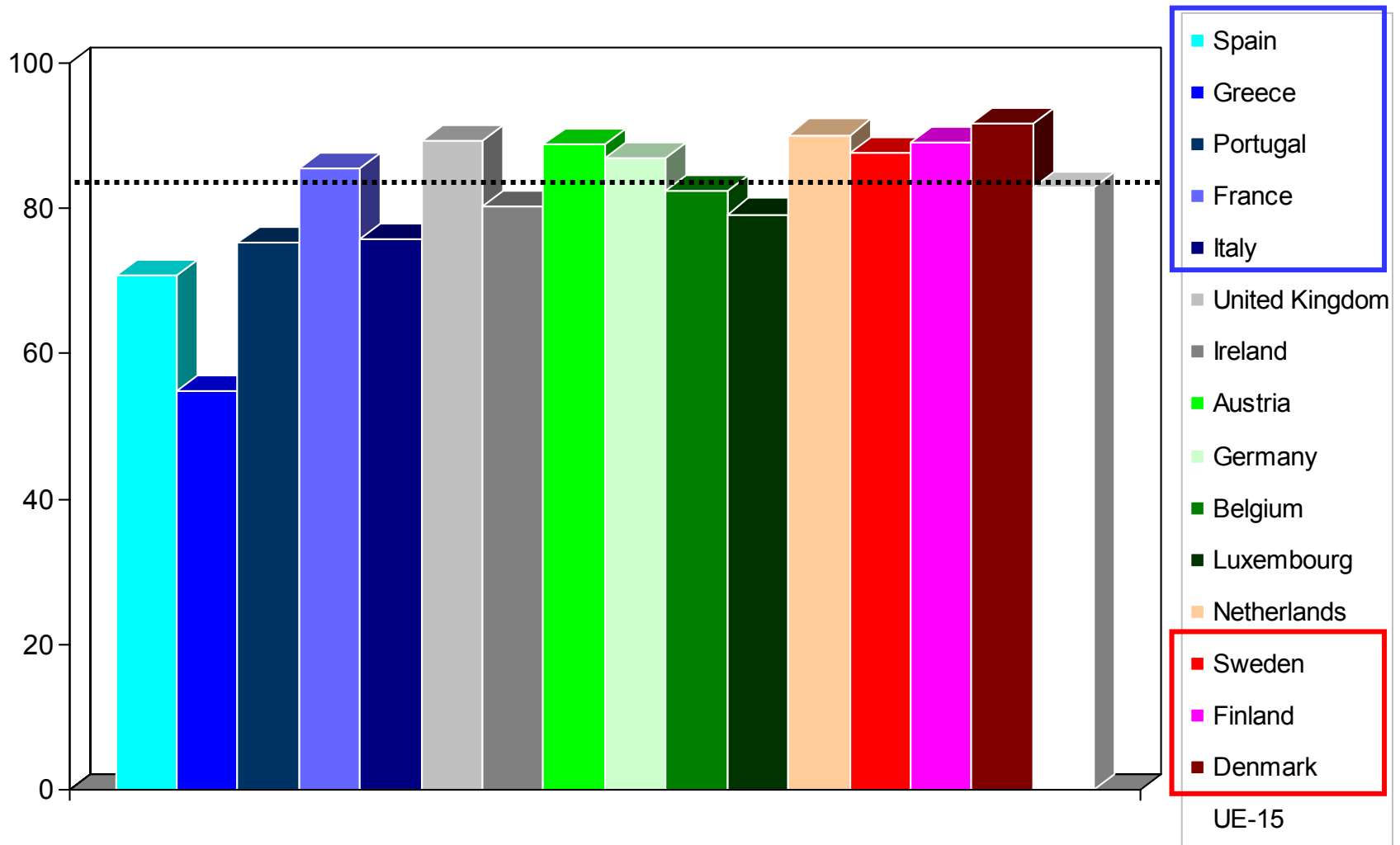
Source: Third European Survey on working conditions (2000)

Within your workplace, are you able to discuss the organisation of your work when changes take place? (percentages)



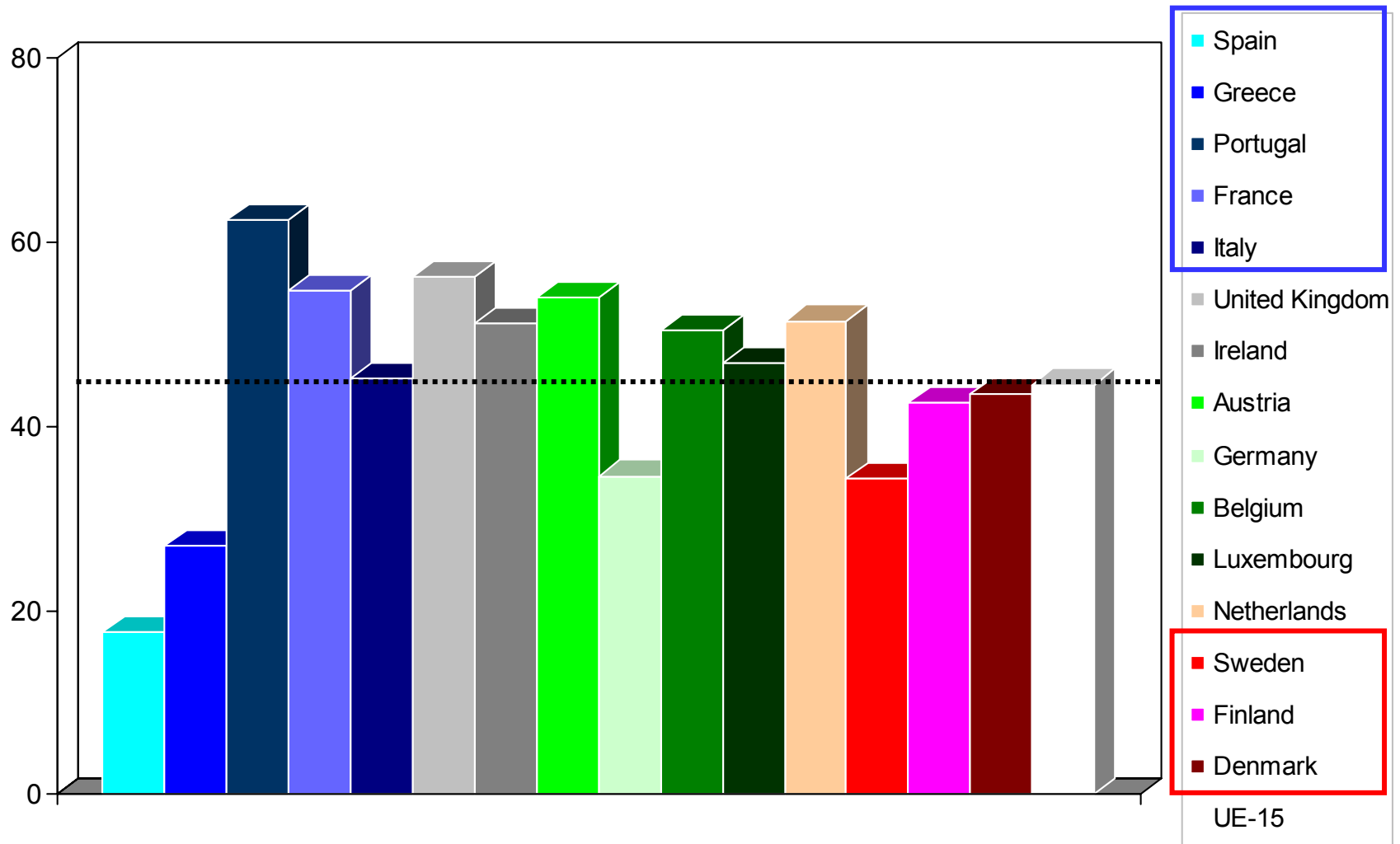
Source: Third European Survey on working conditions (2000)

Do these exchanges of views take place with your superiors? (percentages)



Source: Third European Survey on working conditions (2000)

Do these exchanges of views take place on a formal basis? (percentages)



Source: Third European Survey on working conditions (2000)

Analyses of European Surveys

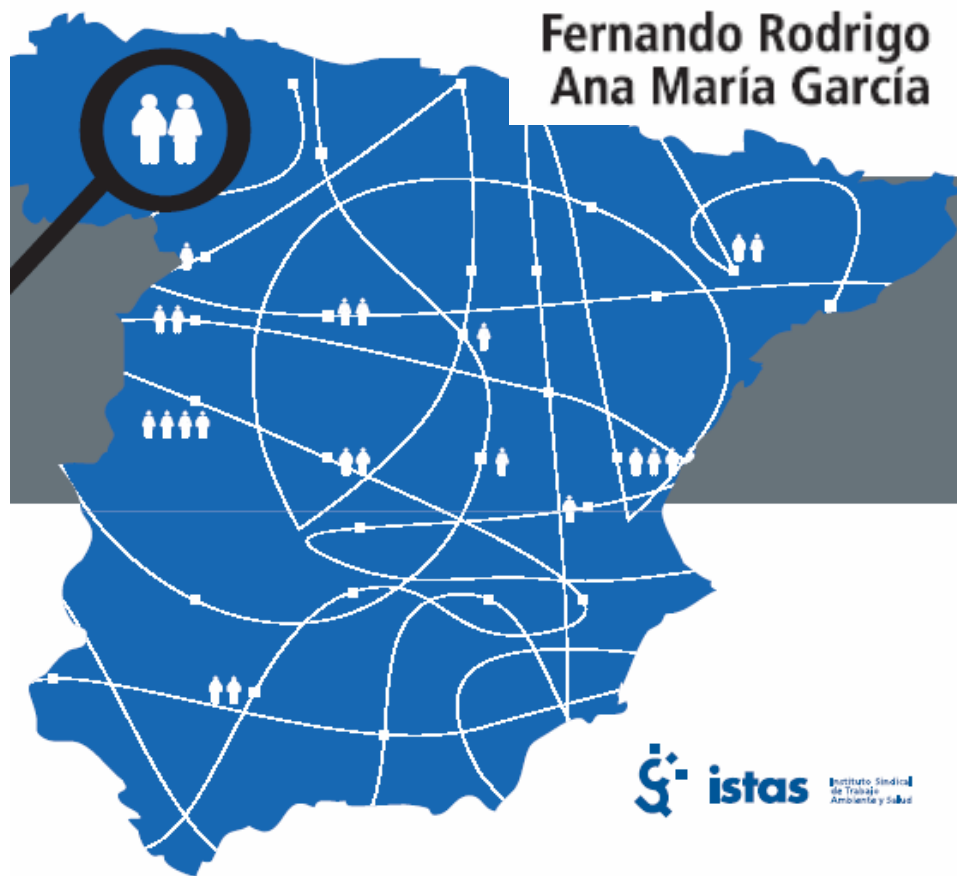
■ The European Social Survey (2002)

- ◆ B45. Employees need strong trade unions to protect working conditions and wages
- ◆ E3. Do you have personal friends within a trade union?
- ◆ E37. Can I just check, is there a trade union or similar organisation at your work place?
- ◆ E38. How difficult or easy is it to have a say (to be consulted and to have potential influence) in the actions taken by the trade union?
- ◆ E39. How difficult or easy is it for the trade union to influence conditions at your place of work?
- ◆ F28. Are you or have you ever been a member of a trade union

LOS DELEGADOS DE PREVENCIÓN EN ESPAÑA: estado de situación

Conclusiones del estudio «Análisis de las tareas y percepciones de los delegados y delegadas de prevención en España» desarrollado por ISTAS

**Fernando Rodrigo
Ana María García**



Estimación del número de delegados de prevención que deberían existir en las empresas españolas según su número y plantilla. **Informe de salud laboral 2004**

Tamaño empresa	Nº empresas	Nº trabajadores	Nº delegados	Indice de representación ^a
De 1 a 5	897.416	1.183.900	0	-
De 6 a 49	266.688	3.773.100	266.688	14,1
De 50 a 249	22.451	2.162.600	44.902	48,2
De 250 a 499	2.153	744.300	6.459	115,2
De 500 a 999	973	666.300	3.892	171,2
De 1.000 y más	786	2.931.400	4.716	621,6
Total	<u>1.190.467</u>	12.101.600	<u>326.657</u>	37,0

^a Número de trabajadores por cada delegado de prevención

Proporción (%) de centros de trabajo con delegados de prevención.
Encuestas Nacionales de Condiciones de Trabajo, 1997-2003

Tamaño empresa	1997	1999	2003
De 6 a 9	12,8	24,2	41,6
De 10 a 49	35,1	48,5	65,4
De 50 y más	72,7	75,2	82,7
Total	28,7%	42,3%	54,7%

Specific objectives

- [3] Describe the **personal and occupational characteristics** of a representative sample of safety reps in Spain
- [4] Describe the **activities of safety reps** and their specific functions as well as the environmental problems generated by the company
- [2] Describe the existence of **occupational risks** in the company
- [3] Describe the **attitudes of the company** regarding occupational prevention and the safety reps functions
- [2] [3] Describe the **situation and expectations on occupational and environmental health formation** of the safety reps
- [3] Describe the **resources and support** available to develop the functions of the safety reps
- [3] Study the **demands and needs** posed by safety reps to make their functions

Theoretical framework to assess the effectiveness of SR actions on health and safety (marked issues are covered in the Spanish report objectives)

A. Socio-political pre-conditions of having SR

Legal factors and regulations
Political factors (collective agreements)
Empowerment of unions
Specific union lobbying and strategies

B. Pre-conditions within companies to implement effective activities

Management and CEOs commitment
Legal factors
Management's positive attitude & practices
Union's pressure
Participation of workers
Empowerment (permanent job)
Union's autonomy
Specific union lobbying and strategies
Union support for safety reps

C. Conditions of SR (structure)

Presence of SR (coverage)
Level of information, training
General resources of SR (time, support...)

D. Activities of SR (process)

Meetings of H&S committees
Respond to worker's queries
Actions of formation and training
Visit workers' places
Participation (inspection, assessment...)

E. Outcomes (results)

Working conditions
Risk factors
Deaths
Workplace injuries
Sickness absence
Health and quality of life

Main activities to be done in the GENERAL PROJECT

- Review of existing scientific studies and grey literature
- Build a socio-political context and legal framework of how activities of safety reps may be effective
- Integrate in a coherent and systematic way the information and data provided by the national reports
- Make interviews to selected key informants
- Explore quantitative links between safety reps activities and health and safety outcomes in European Surveys

Writing and editing of a consolidated conceptual framework

Main activities to be done in the NATIONAL PROJECTS

- Analysis of the data and case studies in each specific national approach
- Writing and editing of specific national reports

Main activities to be done by the CORE GROUP after the final report is done

- Dissemination of the results
- Proposals for a on-going cooperation between researchers and trade unions in that field
- Discussion and writing of recommendations for policy makers and union organizations
- Discussion and writing of a short guideline for trade unions

Main expected Results

1. Specific **national reports**
2. A comparative **general report**
3. An international **seminar**
4. Special issue of the **HESA newsletter** (a synthetic version of the report and part of the presentation made for the seminar)
5. A **short guideline for trade unions** (i.e., factors and conditions for an effective intervention of safety reps)

Participants in the meeting of Brussels 24th of March 2006

Coordinators	María Menéndez Joan Benach Laurent Vogel	Trade Union CCOO University Pompeu Fabra ETUI-REHS
France	Thomas Coutrot Jennifer Bue	DARES DARES
Belgium	Lorenzo Munar Marianne De Troyer	Free Brussels University Free Brussels University
Sweden	Kaj Frick	N.al Institute for Working Life
Czech Republic	Miluse Vachová	University Ostrava
The Netherlands	Jan Popma	University of Amsterdam