

Institution: Cardiff University
Unit of Assessment: 19 – Business and Management Studies
Title of case study: Improving labour relations in the world's ports through social dialogue
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>A model for organisational change in the world's ports has been developed for the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the only tripartite agency of the United Nations. The model, based on Cardiff Business School (CBS) research on social dialogue, has been used to guide the social partners (employers, trade unions and the state) through the processes of structural adjustment and private sector participation in ports in several countries around the world. It has also been used to bring national and international organisations together alongside Cardiff researchers, to develop guidelines for port-worker training, designed to promote competency-based training systems and improve efficiency, safety and health in the world's ports. These Guidelines were recently approved by all 185 member States of the ILO and adopted by the European Commission (EC) as a framework to promote mutual recognition of port-worker qualifications across the EU.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Despite the widely held belief, in both academic and practitioner circles, that dockworkers are inherently 'strike prone' and as such are always and everywhere an impediment to organisational reform and port performance, research led by Peter Turnbull (Lecturer 88-93, Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Senior Management Research Fellow joint with University of Leeds 96-99, Prof 98-present) and funded by The Leverhulme Trust, established that not all dockworkers are 'strike prone', neither in a UK nor an international context^{3.1}. Rather, whilst some ports suffered frequent bouts of worker unrest, others were rarely affected by strikes or other forms of industrial disruption, typically as a result of effective dispute resolution procedures. Subsequent ESRC-funded research on industrial relations and the economic performance of European ports, and on the impact of major structural change in the world's ports, pointed towards social dialogue – which includes all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between, or among, representatives of governments, employers and workers, on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy – as a key mechanism in bringing industrial peace to many ports and facilitating operational efficiency. These findings challenged the prevailing view of policy-makers in many countries who at the time believed that simply deregulating labour markets would lead to improved port performance in a conflict free environment^{3.2}.</p> <p>Subsequent research by Turnbull focused on (failed) attempts by the EC to introduce a Directive <i>On Access to the Port Services Market</i> (COM[2001]35, COM[2004]654), highlighting the efficiency of port services in most EU ports, the costs of social conflict, and the propriety of social dialogue^{3.3} & ^{3.4}. The latter applies most clearly in relation to training. A project carried out by Turnbull in 2008/9 for the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) who received funding from the EC ('Training and qualification systems in the port sector'), involved a review of training and qualification systems in the EU ports sector. This demonstrated both the variation in training standards, and the effectiveness of training programmes developed by port training institutes that involve all the social partners (employers, unions and the state) and by international operators who work with trade unions at the local (port), national and international levels. This research provided the foundations for a global study of training in the port sector, commissioned by the ILO, which identified the benefits of a competency-based training system in terms of protecting safety and health, and promoting efficiency of port operations. This demonstrated yet again the effectiveness of social dialogue as a vehicle to implement change and sustain productive working relationships.</p>
<p>3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Turnbull, P. and Sapsford, D. (2001) Hitting the bricks: An international comparative study of conflict on the waterfront, <i>Industrial Relations</i>, 40 (2): 231-57. 10.1111/0019-8676.00207 2. Saundry, R. and Turnbull, P. (1999) Contractual (in)security, labour regulation and competitive performance in the port transport industry: A contextualised comparison of Britain and Spain, <i>British Journal of Industrial Relations</i>, 37 (2): 271-94. 10.1111/1467-8543.00127 3. Turnbull, P. (2006) The war on Europe's waterfront – Repertoires of power in the port transport industry, <i>British Journal of Industrial Relations</i>, 44 (2): 305-26. 10.1111/j.1467-8543.2006.00499.x 4. Turnbull, P. (2010) From social conflict to social dialogue: Counter-mobilisation on the European waterfront, <i>European Journal of Industrial Relations</i>, 16 (4): 333-49.

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Grants: **Turnbull, P.** (10/97 to 01/99) Labour Regulation and Economic Performance in the European Port Transport Industry, Economic and Social Research Council, Ref. R000235425, £112,390; **Turnbull, P.** (04/98 to 03/99) Commercialisation, Deregulation and the Management of the World's Ports, Economic and Social Research Council, Ref. H52427500696, £43,000.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Since the late 1980s, port reform has been a key priority of governments around the world, with the privatisation of port services forming the cornerstone of these reforms. The associated increase in mechanisation of port work and rapid introduction of advanced communications technologies involves significant changes in the organisation of port labour and human resources in ports. These changes have often been accompanied by strikes and other forms of industrial action, leading to disruption to shipping, delayed investments and job losses in a commercial sector which *"is critical to the conduct of global trade"*^{5.1}. The EC initially planned to deal with these issues via a binding Directive, but through his research, Turnbull *"persuaded the EC that it could not legislate better labour relations in ports, but by fostering social dialogue ... could achieve the same end, and in a more lasting form"*^{5.1}. This work, together with the high visibility of Turnbull's research on industrial conflict, led the ILO to commission him to craft a guidance manual for them to use to promote organisational change in ports, where they see *"a strong need to strengthen the constituents' capacity to perform social dialogue"*^{5.2}. The ILO bring together representatives of governments, employers and workers to jointly shape policies and programmes promoting Decent Work and Turnbull's *"research provided the basis and intellectual underpinning for what became [their] [Practical Guidance Manual on Social Dialogue in the Process of Structural Adjustments and Private Sector Participation in Ports](#)"*^{5.1}. First published in 2006 in English, French and Spanish and with accompanying training materials, these guidelines provided the pathway to impact from 2008, which is described below.

Embedding social dialogue in the port sector

Changing practice: Feedback from participants at a 5-day workshop led by Turnbull to validate the *Guidance Manual*, suggested that country-specific training, held in the nation's primary port, would be the most effective way to embed social dialogue and thus facilitate structural reform. Therefore, a series of country-based social dialogue programmes was implemented. During the summer of 2009, 5-day training workshops were held in three countries - Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia, as part of a project funded by the EC. In each country, a Port Sector Steering Committee was established prior to the workshop, with membership from the state, port employers and trade unions, and this Committee coordinated local research and assisted with the translation of the *Guidance Manual* and training materials. Nominated participants from each of the social partners then attended the workshops at which Turnbull acted as facilitator. By approaching the participants as *"research collaborators"*, rather than attempting to *"lecture"* them, Turnbull engaged them *"in a discussion on how their own experiences fit with his modelling ..."*^{5.1}. In this way he was able to *"effectively communicate complex issues ... and to trigger meaningful debates"*^{5.3}. Each country subsequently produced a National Plan outlining their approach to social dialogue, with nominated representatives presenting the plans at a follow-up workshop. All three National Plans *"highlighted the quality of the training materials developed for the ILO National Tripartite Workshops"* and expressed an intention to utilise both them and the *Guidance Manual* going forward^{5.3}. This activity was designed specifically to promote sustainability of the research impact. In feedback, participants recognised one of the main benefits of the ILO Tripartite Workshops was *"the opportunity it provided for social partners to interact"*^{5.4}, emphasising the importance of Turnbull's role as facilitator at these sessions. A similar programme, funded by the ILO's Latin American regional office, was held in Peru in 2011^{5.2}. Most recently, the *Guidance Manual* was translated into Arabic in anticipation of similar training projects in the Middle East.

The validation workshop was also attended by the Senior Port Specialist of the World Bank, who subsequently incorporated the principles and practices of the ILO *Guidance Manual* into the Second Edition of the World Bank's *Port Reform Toolkit* (Module 7 on Labour Reform). Whilst first published in 2007, this *Toolkit* continues to be widely used in developing countries to facilitate World Bank and International Monetary Fund sponsored programmes of structural adjustment.

Influencing training: The greatest opportunity to bring about positive change through social dialogue exists with 'win-win' topics such as health and safety, and training, as these are areas that

can garner positive engagement from governments, trade unions, and employer groups alike. But, for many years, *“the absence of a framework of reference regarding training requirements for port workers has been an obstacle to engaging a discussion about needs and possible common interests for both employers and employees”*^{5.5}. Building on his research report for the ETF’s study of training and qualifications systems in the port sector, Turnbull’s *“contribution to the development of the ILO Guidelines on Training in the Port Sector was of particular importance in removing this obstacle”*^{5.5}. In 2010, the ILO established an International Working Group of Experts to oversee the development of the *Guidelines on Training*, with membership from: international, regional and national port employer associations; international shipping lines; global port operators; national port employers; international union federations; national port unions; the EC (DG MOVE); and national port training organisations and institutes. A major objective of this project was to convince the industry of the propriety of competency-based training which Turnbull’s research had shown to be particularly beneficial. To this end, several case studies were presented by Turnbull at the first two meetings of the Working Group, based on primary research in Australia, Germany, Singapore, South Africa and the UK. At the third meeting in January 2011, Turnbull presented his first draft of [An International Assessment of Training in the Ports Sector](#) which provided *“a background and overview of ... different models of training”*^{5.6}; the Working Group subsequently agreed to move forward with competency-based training guidelines. In April 2011, [Draft Guidelines on Training in the Port Sector](#), were drafted by Turnbull^{5.1}, presented and then approved by the Working Group, with final revisions made by a ‘Tripartite Meeting of Experts’ (November 2011)^{5.2 & 5.7}. Members of the Working Group were able to *“closely cooperate with Prof. Turnbull all along the negotiation process that brought the adoption of the guidelines, a very significant tool for the sector”*^{5.3}. The *Guidelines on Training in the Port Sector* were officially endorsed by the Governing Body of the ILO in March 2012 and thereby approved by all 185 member States; they have since been *“adopted in sea ports as diverse as Singapore and Vancouver”*^{5.1}. As well as improving efficiency, application of the guidelines helps to improve the skills development of workers, enhancing their professional status and welfare.

Changing policy: As well as promoting democratic participation and having a direct impact on the practices of the social partners involved in the project itself, Turnbull’s research on the use of social dialogue for promoting decent work has been *“fully taken into account in the context of the EU policy making process”*, as evidenced by the Commission’s recent Communication on ports’ policy (COM(2013)295) which *“re-affirmed the extremely powerful role of social dialogue for management of change, modernisation and the creation of better jobs”*^{5.5}. The Commission *“has already expressed to the social partners its commitment to support that dialogue”*^{5.5} and launched its ‘Social Dialogue Committee for Ports’ in June 2013, *“built on foundations laid by Prof. Turnbull”*^{5.1}. *“Covering labour relations in over 300 ports, and embracing some 1.5 million dockworkers, the new EC Committee testifies to the lasting impact of Prof. Turnbull’s contributions”*^{5.1}.

Sustained change: The degree to which the research has become embedded in the shipping/ports industry was recently illustrated in the details of one of the projects identified by the EC under the FP7 Cooperation Work Programme (Transport): *“...another project will address sectorial changes and human issues, specifically needed skills, as a component of wider efforts to make EU ports more competitive and resource efficient.”* According to the EC, this project *“should support the implementation of the International Labour Organisation Guidelines for Training of Workers in the Port Sector ...”*^{5.8}.

Social dialogue in other sectors

The model for promoting social dialogue is based on generic best practice and has a much wider reach beyond its initial application to structural adjustment and private sector participation in ports.

Road transport: The *Guidance Manual* was adapted for a [project](#) funded by the EC (2008/9) and designed to strengthen the capacity of social partners in the road transport sector in Bulgaria and Romania to engage in effective and constructive social dialogue at international, national and enterprise level^{5.9}. Again, a series of tripartite workshops were held and National Plans developed and reviewed at a cross-fertilisation workshop^{5.10}. These workshops were *“important in bringing the parties together and initiating a process of dialogue that has since continued”*^{5.3}. In this context, effective social dialogue can promote and safeguard employees working and living conditions at acceptable European standards, and achieve efficient and competitive operations for businesses.

Public service: Turnbull also *“prepared materials to provide training on labour dispute prevention*

and resolution in the public service, specifically targeting the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia ... This tool was used in the workshop to launch ratification of the Labour Relations in the Public Service Convention, No.151 (1978) which took place in ... July 2012. It focussed on the issue of trust in government institutions, which in the FYROM is the lowest ... of 30 European countries. This tool helped achieve ratification of the Convention in April 2013, because it showed the participants how collective bargaining could be used to address the trust gaps^{5.2}.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. Statement: Former Assistant Director-General (Social Dialogue), ILO, corroborating Turnbull's contribution to the Practical Guidance Manual and Guidelines on Training in the Port Sector.
2. Statement: Director Sectoral Activities Department, ILO, corroborating Turnbull's contribution to the Guidance Manual, Guidelines on Training in the Port Sector and Public Service sector.
3. Statement: General Secretary, European Transport Workers' Federation, corroborating use of Turnbull's research, in particular his research around training in the EU port sector, by the ETF.
4. ILO (2009) Report on the 'International Cross-Fertilisation Workshop on Social Dialogue in Ports in Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia', part of the EC / ILO Technical Cooperation Project, 'Strengthening Social Dialogue in the Process of Structural Adjustment and Private Participation in Ports in Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia.' Corroborates Turnbull's role as Lead Facilitator and the benefits to participating nations. In particular, see pp.3-6 for National Plans and pp.7-8 for workshop feedback. Available at: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---sector/documents/projectdocumentation/wcms_158934.pdf
5. Statement: Head of Unit, DG for Mobility and Transport, EC, corroborating Turnbull's contribution to Guidelines on Training in the Port Sector, and its subsequent use.
6. Turnbull, P. (2011) An International Assessment of Training in the Ports Sector, Geneva: International Labour Organisation. Corroborates Turnbull's contribution, in the form of this report, to the ILO's Portworker Development Programme. Available at: http://www.ilo.org/public/libdoc/ilo/2011/111B09_336_engl.pdf. See Foreword.
7. Report for discussion at the Tripartite Meeting of Experts for the Review and the Adoption of ILO Guidelines on Training in the Port Sector (21-25 November 2011). Corroborates the presentation of the draft guidelines, prepared by Turnbull, for consideration by a panel of experts from governments, employers' and workers' organisations. Go to: http://www.ilo.org/sector/activities/sectoral-meetings/WCMS_164412/lang--en/index.htm.
8. European Commission (2012) Work Programme 2013: Cooperation Theme 7, Transport (including aeronautics), C(2012)4536. See p.67, bullet 1, for corroboration of the recognition by the EC of the importance of the 'Guidelines on Training in the Port Sector'. Revised version (C(2013)3953) available at: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/ShowDoc/Extensions+Repository/General+Documentation/All+work+programmes/2013/Cooperation/Update+Transport+2013WP+27.06.13_en.pdf;efp7_SESSION_ID=1M9sS5rSpQv0RKZXTvwhnyRySK0tn0Pp3Zr47xlKnwjBSvfDNVWQ!1893387052 (see p70, bullet 2).
9. ILO (2009) Report on 'Strengthening the Capacity of Social Partners in the Road Transport Sector in Romania to Engage in Effective and Constructive Social Dialogue at International, National and Enterprise Level', part of the EC / ILO Technical Cooperation Project 'Strengthening the Capacity of Social Partners in the Road Transport Sector in Bulgaria and Romania to Engage in Effective and Constructive Social Dialogue at International, National and Enterprise Level' (2008/9). Corroborates Turnbull's role in delivering social dialogue training in Romania (p1). Available at: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---sector/documents/projectdocumentation/wcms_157388.pdf
10. ILO (2009) Report on the 'International Cross-Fertilisation Workshop on Social Dialogue in Road Transport in Bulgaria and Romania', part of the European Commission / ILO Technical Cooperation Project described in 5.9. Corroborates Turnbull's role as Lead Facilitator (*in absentia*) and the benefits to the participating nations. In particular, see pp.5-7 for National Plans and pp.8-10 for workshop feedback. Available at: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_dialogue/@sector/documents/projectdocumentation/wcms_159532.pdf

All documents and web pages were saved as pdf on or before 18.09.13 and are available on request from the HEI.