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The Green Shift in Norway: Exploring the Impact on Industry Workers

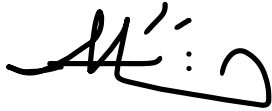
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Declaration:

I, Carmen Beatriz Marta Mapis, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Mapis', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Date: June 7th, 2022

Acknowledgements

This thesis results from a lot of hard work: long hours of reading, writing, thinking, and talking to my supervisors. I want to express my endless gratitude to Professor John Andrew McNeish and Ph.D. candidate Anna-Sophie Hobi for all the conversations and insights I received. Thank you for answering my emails and phone calls and arranging zoom meetings and presential meetings. To both of you, thank you.

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Sincerely,

Carmen Mapis

Abstract

Anthropogenic climate change is a reality that requires transformations. In Norway, the Green Shift represents that quest toward a low-carbon society. This process to tackle climate change will affect different industrial segments, namely the energy sector. This thesis investigates the challenges and opportunities for industry workers within the oil, gas, and processing industries.

Industry workers in Norway stand between different perspectives of what the Green Shift entails. On one hand, Norway's economic dependence on the oil and gas industries created a robust national intertwined relationship with hydrocarbons that currently employs 200.000 workers. The local legal framework regarding fossil fuels protects the future of extractive industries. This occurs despite the global negative impacts of fossil fuel production on climate. On the other hand, a new growing green sector poses opportunities for the industry workers by promising climate-friendly jobs, such as battery production.

This thesis studies Agder, Rogaland, and Oslo as locations impacted by the plans and development of a local battery Gigafactory, as well as locations with most workers from extractive industries.

By 2050, the limit to global warming should remain below 2 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels. After joining the Paris Agreement, several emerging green sectors responded with industrial projects to address the increasing international demand to achieve those climate goals.

Norway tries to balance national interests between the fossil fuels industries and the new green ones. This duality creates discrepancies visible in the views of politicians, trade unions, workers, and investors that participated in this research. This study used qualitative methods based on 53 semi-structured interviews and document analyses. The results highlighted four main challenges for workers: growing inequality, labor precarity, less solidarity, and loss of identity connected to specific professions. The future of Norway's industry workers will test its capacity to achieve a just transition and the ability of the trade unions to protect workers' interests.

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List of abbreviations:

AP: Arbeiderpartiet (Workers Party; Labor Party)

CDA: Critical Discourse Analysis

DNB: Det Norske Bank (The Norwegian Bank)

EEA: European Economic Area

EFTA: European Free Trade Association

EGD: European Green Deal

EU: The European Union

GHGS: Greenhouse Gases

NHO: Næringslivets Hovedorganisasjon

LO: Landsorganisasjonen i Norge (Labor Norwegian Organization)

SV: Sosialistiske Venstrepartiet (Socialist Party)

SWF: Sovereign Wealth Fund

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1 Introduction

The global challenges regarding climate change require action and a transition towards renewables. Promoting jobs attached to low-carbon industries is an essential factor in the process known as the Green Transformation, which Norwegians refer to as the *Green Shift*. By definition, the *Green Shift* as presented by Andreas Bjartnes (2015) entails “a continually ongoing, inescapable and unstoppable process, involving reduced climate emissions and improved resource productivity in all sectors of society, at the same time offering new opportunities for value creation.”¹ The *Green Shift* encounters in Norway a country highly dependent on the oil and gas industry, with ambitious climate goals and tensions between climate and energy policies. In the middle of those tensions industry workers in the oil and gas sector stand between the emergence of green industries promising thousands of new jobs and the claims of stability from the familiar fossil fuel sector.

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the challenges and opportunities for industry workers within the *Green Shift*. The aim is to gain a better understanding of the creation of climate jobs and green jobs within low-carbon industries in Norway, and how this affects workers. As industry workers are instrumental in the development of industries, green jobs are being promoted as a positive outcome of implementing green investments. Therefore, changes and challenges to the labor force represent important indicators to evaluate Norway’s social commitment to a fair and green energy transition (Finance Norway, 2021; Regjering.no, 2021).

Within the European Union that demands increasingly rigorous environmental standards due to the Paris Agreement,² Norway remains influential because of its wealth (i.e., the Norwegian Sovereign Wealth Fund, currently valued at 1.3 trillion US dollars) and its geographic location that allows the country to import and export easily and efficiently (Backer, 2009). Norway also

¹ As translated by Ytterstad and Veimo (2020).

² The Paris Agreement is a legally binding treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 parties, among which Norway was one of the first to sign. (Houeland et al., 2021). The treaty states a series of goals for carbon reduction, presented as targets and timetables that each party decides how to apply (Savaresi, 2016).

has an abundance of hydropower, which is considered to be climate friendly energy, also known as a green energy source, that makes the country attractive for companies willing to invest in so-called green initiatives. The European path towards sustainability follows market-led solutions. Also known as ‘green-capitalism’, the private sector is pushing for green investments and sustainable development (Abid et al., 2022; Sachs, 2012).

Currently, many locations in Norway are committed to the establishment of green industries, which are industries oriented to meet the national and international mitigation targets. For example, Agder County’s support of the construction of a battery gigafactory promoted the establishment of education relevant to building skills and knowledge for increasing the locals’ employability options within green industries. Another example of an industrial area experiencing changes due to the *Green Shift* is Rogaland County. The local production here of so-called ‘green minerals’ such as copper, cobalt, and zinc, is expected to rise due to increased demand for ‘green’ commodities such as batteries. In addition, Rogaland County is heavily reliant on the oil and gas sector and is the area hosting the most highly skilled workers in that field. Although it is perceived that those oil and gas workers would have transferable skills to adapt to green industries, this claim is arguable (Mikalsen, 2021).

Industry workers have experienced a series of changes in recent years, most notably in the high rate of unemployment due to the 2016 oil crisis, as noted in Rogaland County (Statistics Norway, 2016). After the crisis, many industry workers were re-hired in the oil and gas sector, although with temporary contracts. Simultaneously, after the Paris Agreement, the international pressure regarding the climate crisis has been constantly increasing, pointing towards a need for phasing out the fossil fuel industries and moving faster towards renewable energies to reduce carbon emissions (European Commission, 2020; UNEP, 2021; United Nations Framework Convention Climate Change, 2021). This may have created ambivalent feelings amongst oil and gas industry workers regarding their future in the oil and gas industry (Räthzel & Uzzell, 2011).

Norway’s current primary dependence on revenues from oil and gas exceeds the expected revenues from alternative (green) energy sources (i.e., solar, wind, hydropower, and hydrogen) (Forseth & Rosness, 2021). This includes the expected revenues from technologies believed to

be green, such as battery gigafactories. Eliminating revenues from oil and gas, according to the authorities, would challenge the economic robustness of Norway. Thus, the *Green Shift* poses challenges in sustaining the country's current strong economic position (Capasso, 2021). However, the development of green industries is an important part of achieving the national climate goals (Torvanger et al., 2021).

The Norwegian energy sector is expected to establish green industries soon that could profit as much as the oil and gas sector. The 'green-collar' worker, meaning workers within environmentally-friendly industries, will provide the required labor to fulfill processes within green industries (Martinez-Fernandez et al., 2010). Yet, as of today this labor class is not clearly established.

Norwegian industry workers in the energy sector belong to a social class that achieved a perceived position of stability in terms of workers' rights. This entails, for example, Norwegian job security, regulated working conditions, a highly organized labor force, and the benefits of a welfare system. These are necessary elements to facilitate workers' social mobility (Svarstad & Kostøl, 2022). This indicates a Norwegian labor system that apparently has managed to avoid the inequalities typically associated with employer-employee relations within capitalist systems, which pursue the formation of surplus value and profit maximization. Historically, workers make industry possible. This industry workforce has been caught between conflicting parties: those fighting for fair working conditions and the owners/investors pursuing profit. Workers typically seek fair wages and well-being, goals that often require organization (trade unions) to be achieved (Aylott, 2022; Heiret, 2012; Ryner, 2007).

Regardless of Norwegian workers' perceived stability and job security, the 2016 oil crisis proved this notion of a socially oriented Norway to be debatable. The Norwegian tripartite system, composed of the state, the employer, and the trade unions, which was meant to sustain workers' stability, failed to support jobs during the oil crisis. Additionally, transformations in the Working Environment Act (2015) (Arbeidsmiljøloven) gave employers more 'flexibility' regarding hiring with temporary contracts, a change that has created a sense of insecurity amongst many workers. In addition, these significant changes were not made following the

tripartite model (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2015).

The changes in the Working Environment Act did not help workers to achieve contractual security but supported the private sector. By allowing economic benefits for the investors, the executive power highlighted those deemed worthy of protection during a crisis (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2015; Øverbye, 2017; Regjering.no, 2017).

The establishment of green industries to achieve the climate goals of a low-carbon society is an imminent reality for Norway. Exploring how industry workers must adapt to changes and gain understanding of power asymmetries between actors within the *Green Shift* becomes a relevant test of Norwegian solidarity. Are Norwegian trade unions capable of defending workers' standards in today's market-led labor?

This thesis uses 53 semi-structured interviews complemented with document analysis, following a qualitative approach, to gather information regarding the current tensions, challenges, and opportunities related to the encounter of different interests between politicians, industry workers, trade union representatives, and investors.

By investigating the formation of perceptions and realities regarding the *Green Shift* amongst the abovementioned social groups, this thesis explores how their views and values impact industry workers. Furthermore, the analysis discusses the impact on workers in several areas: plan design, cooperation to achieve climate goals, market competition within the Norwegian labor force, and the examination of what the climate crisis entails for industry workers.

My analysis of plan design entails an exploration of participants' strategies to adapt to the *Green Shift*. Cooperation explores the ideas from the aforementioned actors regarding support. Competition and crisis may affect workers differently than other parties studied. These results could be a catalyst for Norway to commit to long-lasting changes that ensure its strong future as a country that combines a profound concern for the environment and climate justice without sacrificing workers' job security.

1.1 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into six chapters: the first chapter presents the introduction of the thesis, which includes a description of the purpose and relevance of this work.

The introduction offers an overview over the complexities related to contemporary industry labor in Norway. This is followed by a brief literature review to acknowledge the academic works concerned with the complexities emerging from green industries the attempts to tackle climate change. This leads to the identification of gaps and research questions.

The second chapter presents methodological concerns and discusses various aspects of the data collection process. The third chapter then explains the theoretical framework used for the analysis of the resulting data. The fourth chapter establishes the background of industry and labor in Norway from a historical perspective, explaining the particularities and challenges of the Norwegian labor market.

The fifth chapter is the core of the thesis, where the data is analyzed, and results of this analysis are presented. Finally, the sixth chapter provides a conclusion and recommendations for further research.

1.2 Literature Review: Understanding Challenges of Implementing Green Industries

This section is concerned with part of the existing academic work and research regarding industry workers, and the establishment of green industries, both locally and globally.

The industrial and economic growth of so-called green industries in times of climate change are highly questioned by Dunlap and Marin (2022). According to the authors, there are misleading calculations regarding the effectiveness of the so-called sustainable replacements to carbon industries, and they claim that what investors and politicians refer to as green growth is nothing but growth. Dunlap and Marin put forward suggestions for a more effective transition, such as paying closer attention to the goals of policies, questioning data, assessing impacts of green extractive industries, and focusing on market-led realities. According to the authors, the current green industries are incompatible with a real green transformation (Dunlap & Marin, 2022). Their article exposes complexities and discrepancies in green industries and questions

the current maximized focus on profit and growth as an effective path to fixing the climate crisis (Dunlap & Marin, 2022).

Although the article brings important suggestions for transformative changes for policymakers, it fails to acknowledge the social implications involved in the process, for example injustice related to labor in both the fossil fuel and green industries.

Concerning the topic of a just transition, a subject concerned with labor that depends on energy industries during processes of transition towards a low-carbon society, the work of Eisenberg (2018) explores the importance of understanding what a just transition entails and why it matters. A just transition, according to Eisenberg (2018), is a term that needs to be more clearly defined and recognized by policymakers as evolved from the labor movement. Workers are acknowledged by the author as one of the vulnerable parties in the green transition (Eisenberg, 2018). Other academics, such as Cha (2020), explore the impacts that shutting down coal mines in the US had on workers, analyzing the position of industry workers as the most affected, even as the losers, of this transaction.

An interesting aspect to include in this background is related to the Green Shift³ as an expression specifically adopted by Norwegian authorities to refer to the process of moving towards a low-carbon society. According to Ytterstad and Veimo (2020), the name is surrounded by senses of ambiguity, as they point out that authorities find it difficult to give concrete examples of what the Green Shift entails. What seems clear, according to the authors, is that the investigated expression, both from the local media and from official documents, is associated with several discourses related to conflictive outcomes imposed upon Norway (Ytterstad & Veimo, 2020). Thus, for example, actors interested in continuing fossil fuels in Norway direct attention away from the real issue: finding a genuinely sustainable⁴ path for a better future.

³ In Norwegian: Det grønne skiftet.

⁴ In the broad meaning, sustainability entails the ability to hold a process over time. Within the context of this thesis, the term reflects the global quest to find practices to combine a balance between human, ecological, and economical practices over time (van Vuuren et al., 2022).

Another interesting angle to consider relates to addressing the consequences for local workers within the energy sector during the global quest towards a low-carbon society, which plays a key role in achieving a just transition (Eisenberg, 2018). The work of Tvinnereim and Ivarsflaten (2016) emphasizes the importance of considering the vulnerability of industry workers when designing policies towards low-carbon futures.

Another challenge for the creation of the green-collar worker in Norway may be connected to the role of trade unions supporting and actively engaging in industry that continues to cause climate change, as pointed out by Houeland and Jordhus-Lier (2022). The authors explain how the lack of support from shop stewards concerning climate change plays a role in making it difficult to achieve a fair and green transition. According to Houeland and Jordhus-Lier (2022), this is a concerning point for the development of green industries because of the influence of shop stewards, who are caught between workers' interests and the increasing need for a change.

Regarding the lack of workers' voices, Ytterstad et al. (2021) discuss how oil and gas workers are presented by media as agents of change coming to the rescue of the industry and adapting to the Green Shift. The article describes changes in the media, allegedly connected to an increased awareness regarding the environment and climate change, that uses narratives of workers as agents of change. The article emphasizes the media's role as concealers, highlighting a need for sincere dialogue between the actors involved in the oil and gas industry to achieve the climate goals. The article uses thematic analysis and frame analysis oriented to understand narratives in climate journalistic over a period of four years. The results focus on oil and gas workers and their presentation as heroes of sacrifice and change, yet more concrete information is needed regarding the process of adapting industry workers of the oil and gas sector into green industries. In other words, information about the jobs and positions in the new industries replacing oil and gas are currently a missing link within the study of environmental labor in Norway.

Moreover, McClure et al. (2017) researched health implications for industry workers in low-carbon industries in the United States. Their quantitative research outlines health issues related to safety issues for workers within the green industries. However, because the study is

quantitative, it lacks the key element of workers experiences if we wish to draw conclusions for Norway.

Following the topic of safety and industrial development, the Norwegian industry sector shares a past and a present of detrimental health issues and risks related to the safety of industry workers, especially in the oil and gas sector, as pointed out by Houeland and Jordhus-Lier (2021); Ryggvik (2015a), and others. Therefore, considering issues exposed by McClure et al. (2017) regarding green industries' impact on workers in the US may be important when analyzing potential challenges for industry workers within green initiatives in Norway.

Risk and industrial development (especially in the oil and gas sector) in the Norwegian past and present represent a start point for understanding potential challenges for industry workers in Norway in general, as pointed out by Houeland and Jordhus-Lier (2021); Ryggvik (2015a). Still, the voices and complexities surrounding green initiatives may provide a wider picture of the potential challenges and opportunities for production workers in Norway.

The academic articles discussed above provide the baseline to understand the Norwegian labor landscape regarding climate change, views within the industrial sector, labor connected to industries today, and the complexities surrounding Norway's dependence on the oil and gas industries. The literature suggests that green industries create a specific labor class: the green-collar worker. The creation of the green-collar worker in the current Norwegian socio-political landscape represents a working-class yet to be created and explored.

1.3 Research Questions

My research aims to investigate the ambiguities, complexities, and opportunities of the Green Shift within the Norwegian context, by exploring the views of politicians, trade union representatives, industry workers, and investors within Norway, a country that has continued to excuse the continuation of the oil and gas industries in times of an increasing global awareness regarding the climate crisis. This awareness is pushing Norway towards a Green Shift. With a focus on the social-economic impacts for industry workers as indicators of the Norwegian social commitment towards a fair transition, this thesis aims to explore the following:

- What are the challenges and opportunities for industry workers in the Green Shift in Norway?
- How do selected politicians, trade union representatives, and investors view the role they play in this process?

The increasing climate and environmental crises demand action and a transformation of modern society. This thesis explores the implications of a growth-based shift towards a sustainable future, where industries and industrial workers play a key role, along with politicians, trade unions, and investors. The goal is to gain a better understanding about what the Green Shift means for Norwegian society by taking as an example the fate of the industry labor market.

2 Methods and Data collection

This chapter will discuss the methodology and data collection selected to perform this thesis, describing the chosen steps to maintain validity, reliability, and objectivity. Bryman (2016) points out that in qualitative research, “our experiences and our interests frequently have some influence on the issues we research” (p. 5). In other words, data collection is often filtered by the researcher's views, who the researcher is, and what the researcher believes. These views, moreover, will affect the decisions and choices made during the data collection.

I will first present the topic of this thesis, stating the rationality of this research design (2.1). I will then elaborate and reflect on the process of data collection and sampling (2.2), present the secondary data sources I will use (2.3), discuss limitations and ethical considerations required during the development of my thesis (2.4), present my fieldwork (2.5), and discuss my positionality (2.6). Finally, I will present my method for data analysis (2.7) and consider validity and reliability in terms of the trustworthiness of the findings and further application of the results from this project on a broader scope (2.8).

2.1 Research Design

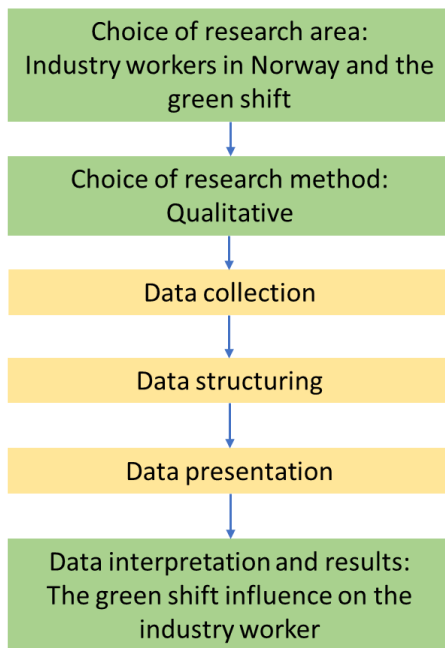


Figure 1 Overall Research Design

The overall build-up of the research design is indicated in Figure 1. I have chosen to use a qualitative approach, where I collect data through interviews and publicly available policy documents.

Then I structure the data to perform a critical discourse analysis on interview objects in a multisite environment. I also use the same approach on the identified documents. Further on I use the identified themes to group and present data for a written explanation of the results and lay the foundation for conclusive remarks.

This thesis aims to study the impacts and opportunities of the Green Shift for industry workers in Norway in accordance to my research questions.

This thesis relies on qualitative methods as an operational tool for collecting data and evaluating the changing nature of the labor market in Norway. Qualitative methods offer inductive approaches, engaging in the dynamics between theory and research to provide an interpretive angle. I chose a qualitative interpretative approach since it allows for a rich and detailed account of the dynamics behind the construction of social realities as explained by participants through words and text, while avoiding reductionist interpretations (Bryman, 2016, p. 375-379).

I wanted to focus on individuals' subjective perspectives and explanations regarding their roles as workers, trade union representatives, politicians, or investors, by using a critical discourse analysis approach that will reveal layers of information that otherwise are not represented using quantitative approaches. I will further introduce this analytical approach in a later section of this chapter.

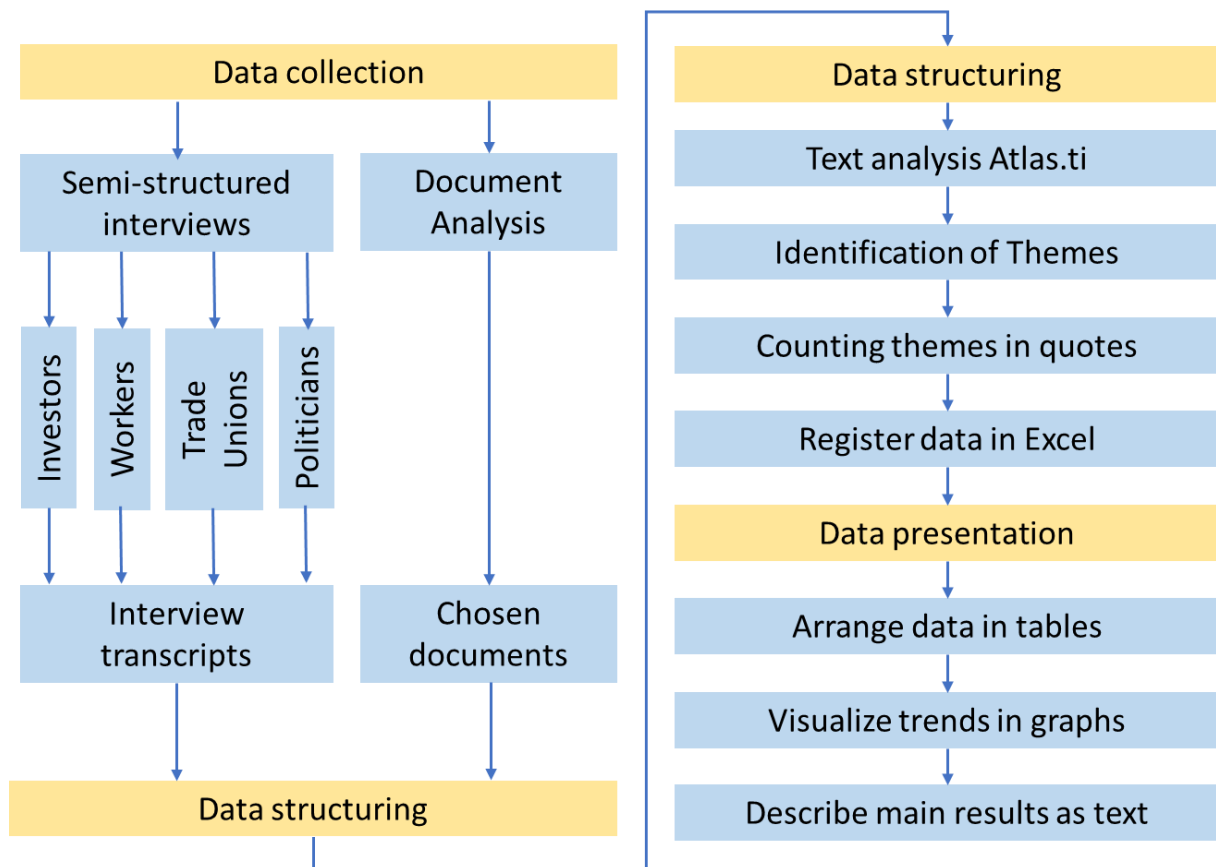


Figure 2 Research Design

The research design for this thesis combines semi-structured interviews as a source of primary data and the analysis of documents as secondary data. I use semi-structured interviews for my primary data because this method of questioning allows interviewees to expand on their experiences, perceptions, and challenges in their respective roles. At the same time, the semi-structured aspect keeps the conversation within the limits of pre-established questions relevant to the topic.

The questionnaire changes according to the group of informants, whether they are workers, union representatives, investors, or politicians, as the roles differ between groups.

Furthermore, I have incorporated document analysis as a complementary part of my data collection process. Document analysis is relevant for my thesis as a way to cross-check the information provided by the informants with the data from official sources.

By combining primary and secondary data, I aim to gain more context for analyzing the implications of the Green Shift. In this part of the thesis, I will focus on content from official documents, media, and policies, to provide thickness to my analysis, explained in section 2.2.2 in this chapter (Bryman, 2016).

I will use critical discourse analysis to analyze the information emerging from these primary and secondary sources of data, an analytical framework that I explain in detail under the data analysis section in this chapter. This approach follows the work of Fairclough (2010).

2.2 Data Collection and Sampling

This section will provide information and justifications regarding the strategy chosen to access relevant informants and the considerations taken to gather sufficient data for this thesis. In particular, I will discuss the background for my sample size and the role of planning and adapting to opportunities and constraints emerging from the current pandemic.

I applied two sampling methods for my primary data: purposive sampling and snowball sampling. I incorporated the former to access participants within specific groups, such as politicians, union representatives, and some investors within new green industries in Norway. The latter began from my existing contacts within the oil, gas, and processing industries.

Purposive sampling identifies individuals relevant to the research questions, described by Bryman (2016) as a non-probability form of sampling.

The researcher seeks participants that are relevant to the queries that motivated the research. For example, workers in a specific area of interest provide insights into the research topic and questions, and further provide the researcher with possibilities to access more individuals willing to participate in the project (Bryman, 2016, p. 408-409).

For purposive sampling, I contacted politicians via the contact descriptions stated in official websites from the Norwegian government. In some cases, I sent an email introducing myself and the project and called the numbers on the website to talk directly with some representatives in their offices. I used the same method for trade union representatives and investors. In the

case of trade unions, I presented myself physically together with the project to their offices and arranged interviews with relevant representatives.

The snowball approach is a technique that focuses on small groups of people relevant to the research questions that will suggest further contacts to the researcher, creating a more extensive data set (Bryman, 2016 p. 415-416). This approach was chosen based on a combination of personal contacts working in areas related to my topic of investigation, as well as participants who held a public position of relevance (i.e., politicians, trade union representatives), who linked the researcher to other people interested in participating in this research. To apply this method in my research, I went through my list of contacts from various sources – social media, university, phone list – and wrote a formal presentation of my research. I presented the model for the interview and the suggested time of 45 to 60 minutes, emphasizing furthermore that participating in my project is voluntary, and explaining the considerations taken to protect informants' integrity and identity.

Bryman (2016) points out that planning the correct sample size is difficult. The broader the scope of the study, the more interviews are required to shed light on a particular social issue. Furthermore, time limits the size of the sample (Bryman, 2016, p. 416). After considering potential complexities, such as time invested in the interviews and how to balance the number of participants from each group necessary to provide me with thick information that is relevant for my research, I identified the groups of interest as follows:

Workers: this group is composed of oil, gas, and processing industries workers. Participants represent a variety of positions, to reflect realities from both blue-collar and white-collar industry workers.

Investors: this group consists primarily of individuals promoting the implementation of green industries in the selected areas of study.

Union representatives: this group consists of representatives connected to the energy sector and the oil, gas, and extractive industries in Norway.

Politicians: this group was selected with the aim of understanding the role of political engagement in green industries.

I interpret the different groups as relevant and interconnected for determining and impacting the future of industry workers in the Norwegian context. Labor Unions depend on membership in order to exist as a force and are therefore placed in the graphic as parallel to workers and as supporters of workers interests. This follows the premise that Norway has a strongly unionized labor force, as shown by Statistics Norway (2021) which indicates that over 60% of Norwegian workers are currently unionized. The Norwegian culture and history with unions, specifically when it comes to industry workers, shares a long trajectory of stable relations and cooperation between trade unions and workers to handle issues regarding wages, vacations, and so on. Following this principle, I place these two groups as interconnected and growing in parallel.

Furthermore, I place a parallel between politicians and investors as groups interconnected by financial interests. Politicians promoting employment and economic growth need actors willing to invest in projects that create workplaces.

The sample consists of 53 semi-structured interviews. The group "workers" represents the most significant sample since a primary goal was to grasp perceptions, experiences, and opinions emerging from industry workers. The other categories were chosen according to their direct or indirect influence in the industrial sectors and their potential to affect the situation of workers.

The sample contains primarily male participants. The group of processing industries includes one female, as does the group of politicians.

Table 1 presented below contains all the participants by groups. I used Snowball sampling for the oil and gas workers by contacting my previously known informants by phone. After explaining my project, two of them suggested other individuals who agreed to participate in the interviews.

Informants by groups	Number of informants
Workers Oil and gas Processing industries	18 (Snowball method; this group started as five individuals) 15 (Both Snowball and Purposive, because the results of the Snowball were not sufficient)
Investors Oil and gas Green industries Processing industries	2 (Snowball from oil and gas workers) 4 (Only Purposive) 2 (Purposive)
Union representatives (Different Trade Unions, all industry related) A representative for trade union 1 A representative for trade union 2 A representative for trade union 3	3 (Purposive) 2 (Purposive) 3 (Snowball from Oil and gas)
Politicians Høyre (Right) AP (Arbeiderpartiet- Labour party) SV (Sosialistisk Venstrepartiet – Socialist left party) AP AP	5 (Snowball led me to the second interview and the three other participants were purposively sampled)

Table 1 Overview of Interviews

2.3 Secondary Data Sources

Document analysis was used to supplement the primary data. I chose to analyze: 1) official state documents, such as the Working Environment Act and White Paper nr. 36 concerning energy and work; 2) publicly available Norwegian policy documents for petroleum and relevant industry issues; and 3) official documents from the private sector, such as companies related to green industries, focusing on the analysis of the language used to explain their vision, and/or regarding the future of industry workers and how they promote jobs. The analytical tool applied

to interpret secondary data is critical discourse analysis (CDA), meant to address power asymmetries in the way language is used in the texts.

Revealing power dynamics in texts is a way of understanding these documents' implications for workers and the labor market from a constructivist perspective. The link between CDA and the social construction of realities results from a deep analysis of language, focusing on rhetoric and the way in which different individuals use the power of language to construct powerful narratives that elaborate and replicate power relations between other groups in society (Fairclough, 2010). For my research, those groups and the analysis of this link between CDA and constructivism is limited to the groups presented under the sampling.

When analyzing documents published by the state, Bryman (2016, p. 552-554) suggests considering issues of representativeness, since these types of documents reflect realities subjected to specific places as well as epochs and are therefore unique. For my thesis, I consider state documents to be relevant because they can increase my understanding of the political context in which my research takes place. I approach each document critically, as I aim to identify biases in the way documents from the state are written and presented. In other words, when analyzing documents deriving from the state, following Bryman's suggestions, I proceed by considering whether it is possible to generalize from these documents, and whose points of view are represented. Each document is grounded in a specific historical and geographical context which shapes its contents.

Relatedly, when analyzing official documents deriving from private sources, I consider Scott's (2005) four criteria, which entail observing matters of authenticity, credibility, representativeness, and meaning of the text. Like Bryman's (2016) argument, Scott suggests keeping in mind that all documents are written by individuals, and as such, one must consider how the author's perspectives, views, and understandings manifest in their work.

Choosing the site of study required some considerations, since what my project aims to explore is a process that is happening in many parts of Norway simultaneously. I chose a multi-sited qualitative approach, explained more in detail under the section of fieldwork.

2.4 Limitations and ethical considerations

As noted in Table 1, I conducted 53 interviews. The duration of the interviews varied between 45 minutes to one and a half hours per interview. All interviews were recorded and transcribed manually. One challenge for the research was language. I wanted the interviewees to express themselves in their mother tongues, following the recommendation of Hemberg & Sved (2021) regarding the value of mother tongues in qualitative research as a channel to precision between expressions, feelings, and language (Hemberg & Sved, 2021). However, some of my interviewees preferred to express themselves in English. Speaking in a second language may limit expressions and access to views in a deeper level. Additionally, most of these languages are as well other than my mother tongue, so my interpretations may also represent some limitations.

Having these considerations in mind, the interviews were conducted in Norwegian, English, Spanish, and Portuguese. I did not need an interpreter as I speak these languages, but the transcription and translation to English was time-consuming. Additionally, written, and oral information was provided to participants about the reason for recording the interviews (to access the data during the analysis process).

The informants received a consent statement attached to the invitation allowing me to register and use the material from the interview (Bryman, 2016). Moreover, the consent letter follows the protocols for sensitive information established by Art. 9 of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): "the data subject has given explicit consent to the processing of those personal data for one or more specified purposes." I took this consideration since my interviewees belong to the group marked as: "Processing of personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person's sex life or sexual orientation shall be prohibited" (Skullerud, 2018).

During qualitative interviews, participants may share potentially sensitive information with the researcher. The researcher commits to preserving the integrity of the participants according to ethical standards to safeguard that the information provided does not harm the informants in

any way (Bryman, 2016). This thesis contains information regarding political views and relations to trade unions. This type of information requires the researcher to comply with specific protocols, as pointed out by the NSD, Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD, 2022). The project was approved under case number 685197. All informants were informed about methods for ensuring their anonymity before participating in this research (see the introductory letter in the appendix). The interviews were conducted in compliance with the protocols for research ethics in the field of social sciences, humanity, law, and theology (NESH, 2016). In order to cover these aspects, I refer my participants as IO 1, IO 2..., IO 53, avoiding mentioning names, age, or gender. However, I refer to the respective groups the IOs belong; for example, IO XX, worker. The analysis of my data follows a thematic order instead of the chronological order of the performed interviews.

The large amount of text that result from 53 interviews would ideally require more time in order to complete an analysis at a deeper level than the one I conduct. This thesis is an ambitious project; therefore, I use Atlas.ti to help navigating the text and code the data.

Gathering data under a pandemic situation represented restrictions and limitations. Still, it provided me opportunities for accessibility and convenience, as I could access participants remotely in the comfort of their homes or quarantine hotels. I performed some of my interviews via videoconference software (Zoom).

This was the case with some of the industry interviewees. Before embarking on the boats, some of my informants were in a quarantine hotel, fulfilling isolation requirements. Other workers from processing industries were also placed in quarantine hotels for nine days. The situation provided a relaxed and appropriate environment free from daily distractions when taking part in my research. Participants had, in general, a more reflective disposition and, as stated by one of the participants, participating in my research provided them with an opportunity to "feel connected to the outside world and socialize a little bit, while thinking about issues that

otherwise I never find the time to reflect about."⁵ However, storing information from these interviews required assessing ethical considerations for data protection, such as properly storing the videos, creating links protected by passwords, and sharing Zoom links only with the participants to avoid information leakage (Lobe et al., 2020).

All my primary data was collected in individual interviews rather than focus groups. I considered this approach suitable to create a safe environment for participants to share their opinions and experiences regarding topics such as membership in trade unions, working conditions, and political views.

Friendship also played a role during my data collection. I was previously acquainted with some of the participants (five units within the oil and gas workers), who therefore knew me and my personal views about politics and the Green Shift. When using the data emerging from these participants, I was extra aware of potential bias if they sounded like they wanted to "help" my case. They represent a minority in my data collection and were one of the reasons why I performed so many interviews: to nuance potentially biased answers with the views of many. Ultimately, I decided not to include these five interviews in my analysis.

Since my budget to conduct this research was limited, I conducted my fieldwork from different camping places in a tent, often outside small villages. This experience provided an "extra" connection with local campers and local inhabitants of the cities I visited during my fieldwork, where I gathered opinions regarding the emerging green industries in the respective areas and the dilemmas raised by the impacts of these projects on local forests and the general non-human inhabitants of contested industrial development areas. However, the low price of sleeping in a tent was countered by the expense of physical treatment and back pain after a while. On my third camping trip in Stavanger, I needed physiotherapy and ended up with unexpected expenses for a good bed and food. The low budget was also a limiting factor for staying for more prolonged periods in each place.

⁵ IO 17 oil and gas worker group from quarantine hotel, zoom interview 21/09/2021



Figure 3 My "house" during fieldwork

In addition, some companies were more willing than others to participate in my research, and it was challenging to gain access to certain industries due to restrictive policies regarding visitors. Therefore, observation and participations opportunities inside their establishments were minimal. Visiting offshore oil platforms requires special permissions, safety training, and boarding a helicopter, limiting my observation possibilities to descriptions, films, and pictures provided by the participants. Not accessing to the working environment of my data constitutes a limitation in terms of context and observations.

Due to ethical concerns, material of this kind that reveals participants' identities cannot be published in this research. Still, they are part of my analysis and give contextual richness to my data and a sense of deep trust between the participants willing to film daily activities in their workplaces and share that information with me.

I would also like to point out that this thesis is based on data gathered from interviewed objects before the Russian invasion in Ukraine, an event that resulted in the rising of oil prices and a change in trade dynamics between many countries and Russia, and before the latest publication of the climate report from the United Nations, which also seems to have implications for decisions towards green investments. This means that both policies and the mental images of the implications of the green shift that the interviewed objects probably had, might have changed somewhat after these events.

2.5 Fieldwork

Fieldwork has been described as a chaotic process, where the researcher oscillates amongst decisions of what to include and what to exclude from the experience, as suggested by Bryman (2016). During fieldwork, it is challenging to get an overview, as the data is often plentiful, ambiguous, filtered by personal views of the researcher, and shaped by bodily experiences and instantaneous impressions (Marcus, 1995). In this section I describe my experience in the field(s) and justify the path taken. I gathered my primary data during six months of fieldwork, incorporating multiple field sites methods.

I chose this approach over single-sited analysis because it allowed me to follow "the thing" and "the people," linked and affected by the same process (Marcus, 1995). In this case "the thing" I am following is the Green Shift. Multisite ethnography is fieldwork performed in several sites related to or affected by a particular broader phenomenon. Multisite observation suits my research since it helps me analyze changes and processes in various localities affected by the same phenomenon (Marcus, 1995). This approach allows the researcher to identify and follow procedures from site to site to explore elements, similarities, differences, and juxtapositions of the same event in various locations connected by the event or phenomenon. As presented by anthropologist George Marcus (1995):

Multi-sited is designed around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations in which the ethnographer establishes some form of literal, physical presence, with an explicit, posited logic of association or connection among sites that in fact defines the arguments of the ethnography (Marcus, 1995).

I chose to conduct my fieldwork inspired by this approach since energy issues concerning the Green Shift happen simultaneously in more than one site in Norway. I wanted to gather information from various groups to analyze how this process is affecting the views, plans, and language of industrial workers in the chosen separate locations. However, I cannot claim to use ethnography, since my fieldwork is more a qualitative analysis of a process happening in multiple places. Nevertheless, my approach is inspired by the work of Marcus (1995).

My fieldwork started with a road trip from Oslo to Agder, looking at different industry sites in the area. The goal was to gain insights regarding projects related to the Green Shift. The concept of the Green Shift shapes potential new realities for Norway's industry workers, as proponents of the development of "green" industries often argue that they are a source of new job opportunities.



Figure 4 Overview of an industrial park

Focused on the industrial interconnections within my area of interest, I chose to explore three localities: Rogaland, Oslo, and Agder. I started by identifying industries and then potential participants related to these areas. The first locality has historical relevance for industrial workers. Since the 1960s, the city of Stavanger has been the capital of fossil fuels in Norway.

As part of the research, I visited the oil industry museum on three separate occasions, gaining new understandings of the expositions, the visitors, and the selection of items, as a statement about the place of fossil fuels in Norwegian society in general and Stavanger in particular.

The second location is Oslo. The city is connected to the Green Shift because some participants work offshore in the oil and gas industries and then return to their homes in the Oslo area. The variations in social distancing requirements in Oslo over time allowed me to meet many of my participants and conduct face-to-face interviews in the Oslo area. Additionally, the main offices of corporations, investors related to the energy sector, and relevant politicians that participated in this research are in this area.

My first visit Rogaland County and Agder County started with a car trip together with my co-supervisor, who was also interested in the area for her research. We drove along the coast and stopped to map the different sites of industrial parks, looking at industrial buildings, parking lots, and searching on the internet for information about the different factories we could identify, comparing websites and then looking at the places that seemed in a constant stage of production. They were big places occupying space but at the same time made invisible behind patches of woods and Norwegian fjords, almost as parallel realities co-existing between the intensity of industry and the overwhelming beauty of Norwegian landscape, with its strongly dominant green and blue.



Figure 5 Processing Industries behind Green Hills

Agder became an area of interest because many projects and industries related to "green" technologies are growing exponentially in this area. That is the case of the Morrow battery Gigafactory being planned and established in Arendal. This location is also engaged with the production and processing of materials necessary to expand projects categorized as green by companies, such as processing nickel, aluminum, and related materials associated with green industries.

As an essential part of my multi-sited approach, I have participated as an observer in talks aimed at promoting green energy and industry. Two were on-line and one was at the Deichman library in Oslo. I visited local museums presenting expositions about industrial development and workers in the respective areas. I regularly read local newspapers and engaged in casual conversations with local people, gathering perspectives (if possible) regarding the industry, work markets, external investments, and the Green Shift. For example, in the Oljemuseet (museum of oil) of Stavanger, I saw the film "Oljeunge" (oil-youngsters), taking notes about how this short film is presented and what type of emotions it aims to create in the audience.

Fieldnotes also constituted an essential source for organizing and keeping chronological track of my experiences related to data collection and relevant happenings during fieldwork. Since day one, I wrote entries in my fieldwork journal, ranging from short thoughts and drawings to longer detailed texts. I used my journal to document my research development, for instance writing impressions after conducting interviews. Materializing on paper my feelings and perceptions of the different daily activities from the various locations of my research helped me contextualize (and remember) the overall experience (Clark, 2020).

2.6 Positionality

Researchers never start a project as neutral observers; the self comes with an identity, a gender, a personal history, traumas, a race, and an occupation. All these aspects of the self are located in a specific time and space (Gajjar, 2013).

I have chosen to write this thesis out of my deep interest in how workers are affected by changes in the labor market and the connection between hierarchies, power distribution, and class divisions. Concepts of critical theory and social struggles have inspired me to seek theoretical

answers about mechanisms of class divisions. However, Norwegian society represents a different set of circumstances, and a different story than the one I grew up with in Argentina.

Norwegian society has been internationally praised as an example to follow because of its social cooperation, strong unionized labor force, and generous welfare system. Still, workers in Norway face imminent changes in a globalized world. These notions guide and influence my approach to studying how external trends may affect workers in Norway today.

Furthermore, I am interested in exploring how trade unions fulfill their role as the protectors of workers' interests in the Norwegian context. The last decade has been particularly demanding on a global scale. For instance, increased tensions between countries due to the unbalanced distribution of wealth, contested interests, and growing environmental issues mixed in with the worldwide pandemic of the covid-19 virus will bring changes and reshape society one way or another.

To conclude, it is impossible to provide bias-free material. Still, to reduce potential bias, I follow my research design, with a foundation meant to keep personal ideologies separate from my data. The data itself is informed by and reflective of the voices of Norwegian workers, politicians, investors, and trade union representatives. In the following sections, I discuss how the exhaustive work of thematic analysis contributes to the overall trustworthiness of the research.

2.7 Data Analysis

In this section I will explain the methods used to make sense of the large amount of data collected and explain why I chose those methods. My qualitative study with 53 semi-structured interviews and multisite fieldwork resulted in a detailed thick data set. A meticulous system for coding and organization was necessary to allow me to recognize the emergence of codes out of my primary data. I used a recognition system and in vivo coding with the help of the software Atlas.ti. This software was helpful for identifying the themes, which appeared as recurrent subjects or patterns from the preliminary data.

After manually transcribing the interviews, I meticulously uploaded the documents to the software, reading through the data. Some recurring statements and topics emerged and were marked with colors, to help me locate patterns in the statements. Further on, I made a notebook of themes and subthemes. I examined these themes under an analytic framework based on CDA to understand how my primary data and secondary data is affected by discursive influence. The combination of these approaches helped me draw my results and answer my research questions.

I have integrated thematic data analysis to understand what the informants said, with CDA to shed light on how the informants talk about their experiences and positions. The thematic approach is concerned with identifying themes or patterns within the collected data, explained by Braun and Clarke (2006) as "identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data". In other words, I used thematic analysis to code my data and identify the different perspectives of the research participants, recognizing similarities and differences that resulted in unexpected insights (pp., 4-16). Furthermore, when conducting thematic research, I closely examined the material to bring up topics and ideas appearing recurrently, in order to identify themes (Nowell et al., 2017). I then used the resulting themes as a way of coding my data. The Green Shift in Norway thus resulted in the following codes: opportunity, crisis, control, trust, precarity, identity, threat, responsibility, competition. These codes were subsequently combined into four primary themes: Plan, Cooperation, Competition, and Crisis, with a series of subthemes within each.

CDA is a method developed from a branch of linguistics, inspired first by Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci is known for his theory of cultural hegemony, which shows how the state and dominant classes, also known as the bourgeoisie, use cultural institutions to preserve power in capitalist societies. Building on these ideas, Michel Foucault reflected on the creation of truth in a process structured by the knowledge created by certain groups that conditions the reality of broader society (Foucault, 2013). For Foucault, the normalization of facts followed how knowledge was produced by socially constructed structures (Foucault, 1988). In later works, Foucault explicitly questioned how discourse influences people's mentality and prompts them to govern themselves in specific ways – a process he called governmentality (Fairclough, 2010; Svarstad et al., 2018).

Foucault showed how explicit judgments become the hegemonic discourse accepted by society (Foucault, 2013). Most discourse analysts admit that discourse can happen in various forms of communication. However, the focus is placed on language (Fairclough, 2010). The CDA approach is a branch in the field of sociolinguistics which produces "text-only" analyses. However, the focus of study within the CDA approach goes beyond the language, in which case the researcher writes, in addition to what is said, descriptions that emerge from the source, the way something is said, the gestures and tone as well as what is implied but not mentioned directly (Bryman, 2016; Fairclough, 2010; Maxwell, 2013).

One perspective is that our thoughts and actions are linguistically defined and that we as humans cannot think (and then act) outside of communication. Following this line of thought, language has the power to predict how people act (Fairclough, 2010). Another perspective, as followed by other academics, looks towards social practices and argues that discursive truths influence the habits of people by determining norms and values of what is average or suitable (Maxwell, 2013). Such notions then spread through the way people interact and ultimately report to the logic of institutions (i.e., enterprises, institutions, or systems of national and international relations).

Finally, discourse works in a cognitive dimension (Williamson et al., 2018). In such an interpretation, discourse is the expression of human thought and consequently has its origins in the interface between our physical and social environments and our minds. The key to discourse relies on the cognitive experience of individuals with the world through flawed sensory organs and how human beings share these experiences through discourse.

CDA aims to identify how power is implemented through language, that is, the implicit ideological forces that create asymmetry in power relations in spoken language or from written texts. Norman Fairclough (2010) created a three-dimensional analysis inspired by a Foucauldian tradition of interpretative discourse. This method is concerned with how power is exercised through language, where language is seen as social praxis. For Fairclough, conducting critical discourse analysis requires three main steps, defined as text, discursive practice, and social practice. Category one is the center, also called text. Text can be speech, writing, images, or a mixture of all three forms of communication. Fairclough (2010) suggests that this first level

considers individual words. The second dimension is called discursive practice. It involves the production of text or the constitution of texts. In the second dimension, one focuses on the level of whole texts. The third dimension, social practice, is about society's standards or organization, in other words, social structures. The analysis here is called the norm level. Fairclough assumes that language helps create change and, therefore, can change or impose behavior. Language becomes a power tool within a specific context (Fairclough, 2010).

I use CDA because this analytical tool provides layers of interpretation of the discursive actions present in social interactions (Fairclough, 2010, p. 11). This allows the researcher to understand how participants use and shape power through different linguistic dynamics, and how power relations are reproduced and accepted. The participants have a shared experience of a process, in this case, the Green Shift. At times, shared experiences and perceptions cohere into shared understandings of reality. Furthermore, these shared understandings naturalize specific social assumptions, such as the assumption of given economic models as the normal (Fairclough, 2010). Additionally, CDA is an approach that looks for linguistic strategies used in a text, explaining how individuals choose to express themselves about specific issues. The choice of certain terms when referring to a given topic creates a sense of abstraction, or connection, to the subject. This then results in definitions being taken for granted in ways benefiting some actors and their goals, to the detriment of others. Discourses shape individual self-understandings, present worldviews, and futures. This process often plays a crucial role in developing social acceptance or normalizing issues (Fairclough, 2010; Williamson et al., 2018).

Since this study is mainly based on qualitative interviews, to answer my research questions I found thematic analysis combined with CDA to be an interesting combination. The combination with thematic analysis sheds light on repetitive issues, that after identified and determine the themes, these two methods complement, not all, but many aspects of the data, leading me closer to reveal impacts and opportunities emerging from the different worldviews of the groups of participants. Furthermore, I apply CDA to study whether, and if so, how my participants' worldviews contradict each other, or whether they support a shared understanding of reality at some points, creating acceptance. Moreover, if they complement each other, I study how they create dynamics that highlight how the process of cooperation between individuals matches

with the main narratives and power dynamics surrounding the implementation of new industries in Norway.

2.8 Trustworthiness

Assessing quality in qualitative research can be challenging. Some researchers choose to rely on the quantitative criteria of reliability and validity as assessment tools. However, these methods of determining quality are not compatible with the nature of qualitative research (Bryman, 2016). I therefore draw on the concept of 'trustworthiness,' an idea that relies on the researcher's capacity to problematize their positionality in the research (Bryman 2016).

As an aspect of trustworthiness, I use respondents' validation, which entails contacting the interviewees after some time to confirm statements and ask for clarifications of potentially unclear points after performing the transcriptions (Bryman, 2016).

One way to establish credibility is through the researcher's capacity to reflect on the participants' views. In other words, how does the research establish that they understand what the participants mean? (Tobin & Begley, 2004). I have cross-checked consistency in information with what is established in secondary written sources to respect this aspect. In some cases, I have applied respondents' validation to confirm that what I understood was what the respondent meant.

According to Tobin & Begley (2004), one of the main elements in trustworthiness is dependability, which entails that the research process is traceable, logical, and documented so others can examine and judge the terms of quality (Tobin & Begley, 2004). This chapter has aimed to provide a clear roadmap for the reader, explaining transparently how data has been collected and analyzed and how the social nature of this research process has influenced findings.

3 Theory

This chapter explains the theoretical approach used in the analysis of the implications of the Green Shift for industry workers in Norway. These theoretical perspectives were developed after the process of coding my data.

Two important names and theories within the field of social sciences provide the theoretical framework for my analysis: Karl Marx's class division and Michel Foucault's discourse. I will use these two theorists directly, and also use the synthesis elaborated by Jacques Bidet, a French philosopher and social theorist who merged these two complex theories in his book "Foucault with Marx" (2016).

This chapter is organized in three sections. The first section briefly explains the relevant elements of Marx's work that I have used as a theoretical framework for my analysis. The second section presents a brief introduction to power and Foucault's discourse, further explaining the elements used in my theoretical framework. The third and last section presents a conclusion reflecting on the synthesis suggested by Bidet (2016) as well as the advantages and challenges of using these theories for researching today's Norwegian industrial context.

3.1 Defining Marx's class divisions

The contested dynamic of the capitalist ways of production has concerned and fascinated many scholars, philosophers, sociologists, and economists since the early stages of industrial expansion and the start of the capitalist economic system in modern society. One of the classic scholars questioning this mode of economy was Karl Marx (1818-1883), a German Jewish philosopher, sociologist, socialist, and economist concerned with the organization of society influenced by the capitalist system of markets (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2021, pp., 30-31). Marx wrote about sociological and economic insights focused on questions and issues that emerged during the industrialization of society in the mid-1800s. One such topic is the alienation of workers from the final product they produced due to the advance of machines separating the worker from the product in the process of industrialization and mass production (Marx, 2013, pp., 238-244). For Marx and economist Friedrich Engels (1820-1895), the dynamics of capitalist societies, based on the continuity of growth from an initial capital,

resulted in the impoverishment of the working classes and caused inequality in society, as the pursuit of exponential profit characterized the capitalist methods of growth (Braverman, 1998; Harvey, 1985; Marx, 1976; Marx, 2013, pp., 2017-214).

For the analysis of my data, I use some elements from the critical analysis proposed by Marx regarding the capitalist means of production as the reason for class divisions (Marx, 2013, pp., 250-256). The starting point for the critical analysis of my data is concerned with issues of appropriation, capital accumulation, inequality, and the exploitation of both labor and the environment in the pursuit of value creation (Marx, 2013, pp., 120-127).

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Marx's social diagnosis of the early industries was the class divisions within the capitalist society and class struggle. In their work "The Communist Manifesto", Marx and Engels (1845) reflected on the social impacts and contribution to political and economic aspects that emerged from the capitalist society. Their work is a socio-economic analysis of class divisions caused by the capitalist modes of production. A capitalist society, they claim, results in a division into three main groups: the bourgeoisie, the petite bourgeoisie, and the proletariat. Marx's social-economic analysis further elaborates a relation of conflict between these opposite classes, explained as the bourgeoisie, or capitalists, representing the ruling elite owners of the means of production, and the proletariat and petite bourgeoisie representing the laborer.

This class positioning was, according to Marx, not the result of chance but of pre-existing social structures that allowed the bourgeoisie to accumulate their primary capital by dispossession (Marx & Engels, 2004, pp., 219-230). The second class, according to Marx, was the proletariat, represented by workers in precarious conditions. This class depends on their jobs and positions in order to exist. In other words, the proletarians have no other means to support basic needs than their wages. Finally, Marx mentions the petite bourgeoisie, represented by workers with access to better economic conditions than the proletariat due to education level, social connections, and/or skills. This third class aspires to be part of the bourgeoisie, yet remains in the middle between the lower class and the upper class (Marx & Engels, 2004, pp., 247-249).

For Marx, the capitalist elites exercise power with their capital, whereas the workers can exercise power by organizing in unions and going on strike. Although Marx is quite deterministic, the implications of his claims of class struggle and division still reflect some aspects of the struggles in many contemporary societies. According to scholars such as David Harvey (1985) and William I. Robinson (2012), Marx's original analysis can be adjusted to fit struggles in different epochs, for example globalization and the rise of transnational capital.

In the case of Norway, many scholars claim the absence of ruling classes for the Norwegian context (Rusten et al., 2013). This theory is supported by historical descriptions of a society that emerged from farmers and that after the Second World War managed to establish a growing economy based on socio-democratic values with strong state involvement (Chan et al., 2011; Lie, 2016). Additionally, as will be pointed out in the background chapter, Norway possesses a high rate of organized labor and a generous universal welfare system. Nevertheless, in my data I recognize to a certain degree in the contemporary Norwegian labor market the same dynamics criticized by Marx. Although Marxist critique is not a perfect theory for the Norwegian context, in my engagement with the collected data, I recognize the increasing influence of market-led labor, a focus on 'profitable' outcomes expressed by the local authorities, and local adaptation to global trends of production and class. The state of the leading economic system in today's transnational world is changing Norwegian industries and labor.

In my data, comments from the group representing the voices of industry workers indicated that this 'primitive' Marxist theory has some relevance for my data if combined with an extra exponent of critical theory. I have therefore added one recent scholar to this section: Naomi Klein (2007), choosing her work "The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism".

Klein's work challenges Marx's depiction of a capitalist system that is doomed to collapse. For Klein, capitalism has not only survived several global economic crises by reinventing itself; in addition, capitalism thrives and benefits from catastrophes, war, and environmental catastrophes. This is done by the imposition of economic shock cures that benefit the private sector, argued for as economic re-construction, investments, and the creation of jobs. Klein argues that the shock doctrine of capitalism, far from improving the economy, causes mass

unemployment, inequality, and poverty for the broad society, while a few actors become extremely rich (Klein, 2007).

Furthermore, Klein (as did Marx) hypothesized that inequality, poverty, and precarity are operational pieces of the capitalist mode of production: capitalism needs to produce inequality in social structures to subsist (Klein, 2007; Marx et al., 2008).

What is missing within this theoretical framework is the identification of power asymmetries and the formation of power relations between actors and social structures in Norway. This needs to be paid attention to in more subtle ways. For this purpose, Foucault's analysis of discourse will be discussed.

3.2 Defining Foucault's discourse for the Norwegian industrial context

Power exists in almost every thinkable social relation. There are many different definitions of power, and theories that tried to identify where it rests. Within constructivist approaches, as the one defined in this section, the notion of power could be defined as follows: getting others to think in a way that benefits certain group's goals (Lukes, 2004). This multidimensional definition seems to be inspired by the work of Antonio Gramsci (1892-1937) regarding cultural hegemony, which entails a form of coercive domination determined by ruling groups seeking to overpower other groups; if this goal succeeds, the subordinate groups would then follow a common dominant fundamental narrative that over time translates as common sense, a naturalization of despotic dominance (Gramsci, 2007).

This idea of tactically and socially constructed behavior was later studied by other academics, focusing on discursive communication as a mean of power. The work of philosopher Michel Foucault (1926-1984) represents one of the most remarkable exponents of critical theory that followed the line suggested by Gramsci. Foucault was a philosopher concerned with social phenomena related to how reality is created and transformed through a specific use of power he called "discourse" that can be defined as a constructed truth or knowledge regime, used in, for example, political solutions, law, speeches, and media. Power distribution is a relevant element in identifying the implications of discourse (Escobar, 1984; Foucault, 1971). The tension between the various actors and their views on projects would potentially benefit some

actors and affect others (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2021). I want to establish a theoretical framework that will help me recognize discursive power expressed in my data.

Foucault proposes that the creation and diffusion of knowledge constitute an area between opinion and science that results in something more than written systems, linguistics, and text. This area includes not only texts, but also social practices, accounts, acts, customs, and social institutions that in coordination create its objects (Foucault, 2013 pp., 1-17). For Foucault, discourses are shaped and repeated by actors. Discourses become agents that exert influence on the ways of thinking and acting of the involved actors. Some actors possess higher influential power than others inside the creation of a discourse. Discourse can be recognizable in different forms such as, opinions, ideas, culture, paradigms, theory, and narratives.⁶

Foucault suggests that recognizing discourse is essential for the identification of the power exercised by actors through inherent relations. For example, Foucault refers to family, workspace, and/or religious community as surfaces of discursive emergence. These are social and cultural areas through which discourse appears (Foucault, 1982).

With this explanation as theoretical background, I use discourse to analyze my data: who are the actors producing and who are the actors reproducing (or transforming) discourse? Furthermore, this recognition helps me understand potential impacts and policy outcomes that emerge from the discursive dynamics emerging in the data.

3.3 Relevance, challenges, and a conclusion

Despite the differences between these approaches, my intention is to benefit from the differences and elements expressed by these authors as complementary frames to understand

⁶ A narrative can entail a constructed story that contains internal smaller stories, arguments, and outcome scenarios. Within a narrative one often encounters heroes, protectors of victims, victims, and villains. The strong narratives within authorities sometimes make their way to the processes of policies, affecting society (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2021; Svarstad, 2002).

the social practices of my data. My goal is to create a conversation between two currents within the context of labor in the Norwegian energy sector.

In my analysis, I use Marx's intersection between the market and capital and his theory of class division and labor struggle to analyze complexities and opportunities in the energy industries within the context of the Norwegian Green Shift. Following Jacques Bidet's interpretation of "Foucault with Marx" (2016), I also use Foucault's discourse to understand the influences of the administrative aspects of capital. Observing the power asymmetries between actors and their agency to influence the production of discourse determines the potential outcomes and impacts for the different groups.

A potential challenge in using these approaches is the impossibility of achieving a total and perfect understanding of the contextual reality of each participant. The choices that everyone takes in their lives will have aspects that escape my comprehension, for which an actor-oriented theory could have shed light. Still, after engaging with the data, the thematic and CDA approaches used to obtain the themes and subthemes (described in chapter 2) moved me towards these theoretical frameworks as interesting analytical tools for understanding the contemporary Norwegian labor landscape. The gathered themes from the data resonated with the CDA as different narratives that pointed out discourse to reflect in issues of power asymmetries and class struggles to analyze and compare issues of inequality, job security, and test the strength of trade unions within the industry sector.

4 Background

4.1 The Green Shift in Norway

Since the late 1960s the oil, gas, and processing industries have been an important source of work for thousands of industry workers. This sector has provided opportunities for individuals to climb up the social ladder in exceptional ways. The area of Rogaland is the one that to the present day has hosted the most industry workers related to the oil, gas, and processing sector. The high focus on this sector has also created challenges for other local industries, and for other locations, such as Agder. Currently, the area of Agder contemplates new opportunities together with the increasing necessity for a change toward green industries, and new initiatives are appearing, bringing to the area a renewed hope of growth, both monetary and regarding population.

Extractive industries, as well as the import and export of goods and energy, constitute the economic motor of Norway. The country's natural resources and geographic characteristics have allowed the flourishing of several industries since the late 1700s. Domestically, Norway's rich water resources produce hydropower. This represents one of the advantages of the country, since this energy is considered environmentally friendly (low-carbon emissions), covering approximately 98% of Norway's electricity needs (Halvorsen & Stjernø, 2008; Rusten et al., 2013). Additionally, the country possesses a vast coastline of fjords, with several ports that communicate to the rest of Europe. This geographic advantage provides export and import possibilities for Norway (Graabak et al., 2017).

Human-induced climate change and environmental degradation represent global challenges that require acute action and changes. For the last decade the international pressure to achieve the climate goals and reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs)⁷ has increased considerably (Wolf et al., 2021). As a result, Norway established a National Plan (2019) to establish cross-sectoral

⁷ Greenhouse gases entail gases that create heat in the atmosphere, for example CO₂, nitrous oxide, and methane. These emissions are the result of anthropogenic activities, for example fossil fuel energy, transport, several industrial processes (LoPucki, 2022).

measurements to implement taxes for emissions, and carbon-trade agreements that cover 50% of the current national emissions, as stipulated in the Norwegian Climate Change Act. Authorities claim that these measurements excuse the oil and gas sector in an exchange that academics find arguable (Cullen, 2014; Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2019; Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2022).

Simultaneously, Norway is one of the biggest oil and gas exporters in Europe. Norwegian industries, (especially the ones related to hydrocarbons), currently stand in the dilemma of choosing a path within the political economy of climate change, toward a low-carbon society. For Norway, as for the rest of Europe, finding a sustainable and environmentally friendly future is a vital necessity that challenges the continuation of activities that impact the climate and the environment (Bang & Lahn, 2020).

The European response to climate change presents a path towards producing green industrial profits with less abrasive results than the ones caused by fossil fuels. Therefore, investments and industries referred to as *green* (due to their low-carbon impact compared to oil and gas industries) have increasingly emerged. For example, the growing market of Battery Electric Vehicles, the quest towards alternative energy sources (wind, solar, hydrogen, hydropower), and many other industrial sectors oriented to lowering emissions (Bauer, 2018; Gullberg, 2013).

Norway refers to this quest towards a greener (meaning low-carbon) future as the *Green Shift*. The process of greening the economy uses terminology that varies from place to place. In Europe it is known as the European Green Deal (EGD) as referred to by Schunz (2022). Others refer to this process as the Green Transition, The Green transformation, and the Global Green New Deal⁸ (Bjartnes, 2015; Laurent, 2020; Wolf et al., 2021).

For some Norwegian authorities and investors in the energy industry sector, the *Green Shift* has been a term loaded with negative connotations. Ytterstad and Veimo (2020) analyzed the different uses of the term the *Green Shift*, concluding that the term is often used without

⁸ The United States of America uses the Green New Deal to distinguish from the Green Deal related to a 'revolution' in agriculture (Kedward & Ryan-Collins, 2022).

concretely explaining its meaning. Furthermore, the authors analyze the definition presented by Bjartnes (2015) as deterministic, something that comes upon us and is impossible to stop (p. 23). A different scenario would be to embrace this paradigm shift⁹ as a positive change for humans (Koch, 2015). However, aspects of the current leading global political economy follow the logics of value reproduction and competition in a world empowered mainly by fossil fuels (Kristoffersen & Ryggvik, 2015).

The current worldwide consumption of energy is 78% generated by fossil fuels, a fact that often appears in the promotion of the petroleum industry (Daggett, 2019). Oil and gas export constitutes 60% of the total Norwegian value of export and import in goods. The prices of fossil fuels are currently stipulated at 101,37 dollars per barrel, Norway's current production of crude oil is 1,960,000 barrels per day (Norwegian Petroleum, 2022).

The increasingly growing revenues from the oil and gas industry brought to Norway budgetary surpluses that required management to ensure a future oriented administration, avoiding losses due to oscillations of the oil prices. The Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF) was originally created as a Fund of Pensions, a savings fund to manage the surplus created by the oil and gas sector (mainly) in an administrative tactic that for Norway functioned as preventive of a resource curse¹⁰ (Austvik, 2007).

Currently, Norway has the largest SWF in the world, valued today at 1.4 trillion dollars in assets. It was established in the 1990s as part of the Norwegian resource management of national wealth and profits mainly from fossil fuels (Regjering, 2022).

⁹ A paradigm shift entails a new solution created to replace a former standard notion. This dynamic is used to describe major changes within natural sciences, but is also used in other areas (Kuhn, 1970).

¹⁰ The term *resource curse* is commonly applied to demark how countries rich in profitable natural resources strive to find a way to administrate wealth emerging from their resources to increase their own economies. However, according to McNeish & Logan (2015), the answer to this dilemma implies avoiding reductionist conclusions and requires a deeper analysis of the mix of counterproductive factors, involving several elements that may vary depending on the place of study, such as politics, history, and socio-cultural aspects.

Another recurrent argument related to the Norwegian protection of the oil and gas sector is the universal welfare system of Norway. Norway, as other Nordic countries, includes a distinctive element in their economy, the social care in the form of a universal welfare system. The roots of welfare in Scandinavia rely on Otto von Bismack's strategy to avoid social revolts and strikes from industry workers, by providing for a precarious and growing labor force a minimum amount of welfare to cover their basic needs (Stefan, 2015). This is delivered to the population as social security benefits, pension plans, health care coverage, and so forth. In other words, in the welfare state, the state takes the role of protector of society as a collective, to promote integrity and eliminate poverty (Halvorsen & Stjernø, 2008).

The period from the 1950s to the 1970s, from a general perspective, represented a time of growth and industrial flourishment, with a protectionist governmental approach in which welfare gradually amplified benefits for the population. The Norwegian market regulations were designed to control the market of certain products such as private vehicles and promote the state as significantly involved in the industrial development of Norway (Espeli, 2008).

Although welfare existed prior to the oil and gas industry, the connections of the generous welfare system to the oil and gas sector, and even its very survival, has been increasingly remarked upon by authorities (Bang & Lahn, 2020)

For a country heavily reliant on the revenues from the oil and gas business, the *Green Shift* represents potential challenges in economic terms, as well as for the labor involved in this sector. For instance, the oil and gas industry in Norway employs today over 200.000 workers, including upstream, downstream, and midstream activities. Although technological advances in efficiency and automatization increase every year, every extractive and energy industry depends on skilled operative workers, engineers, and drivers (Ryggvik, 2018b).

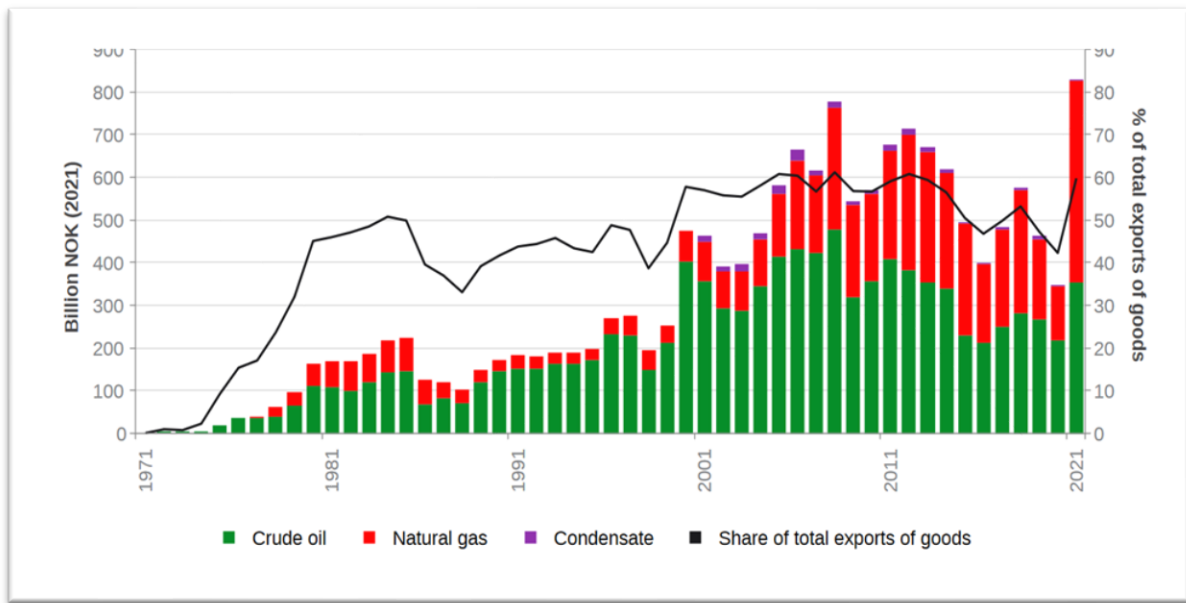


Figure 6 Source: Statistics Norway, table 08800

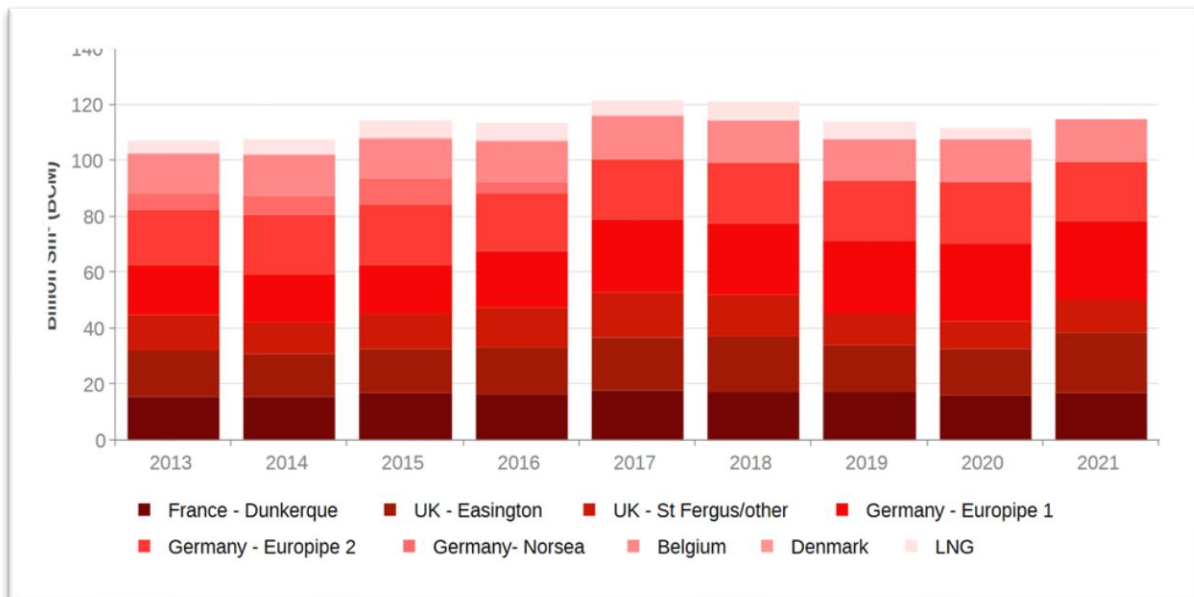


Figure 7 Norwegian natural gas exports in 2013-2021 by first delivery point

4.1.1 The new ‘green’ industries: the case of Agder

According to the Norwegian government, transitioning to a low-carbon society means finding alternatives for growth. The goal, according to authorities, is to cut emissions without cutting the economic standards of Norway (Norwegian Government, 2015; Regjering, 2021).

Electrification of transportation represents one of the most prominent strategies of Norway to achieve national climate goals. Norway is currently considered a pioneer country in adopting and selling electric vehicles. According to the Norwegian Electric Cars Association (2021), the country is an example to follow in reducing emissions caused by transport pollution. The promotion of this new 'green' commodity resulted in a drastic increase in consumption within the Norwegian population due to economic incentives (Bauer, 2018). Thus, the demand for batteries increased (Perry, 2019).

Arendal municipality, located on the southern coast of Norway, has prepared a significant portion of land and water facilities to construct a battery gigafactory. Eyde energy park designated 950.000 m² to this project, and the university of the area, Agder University, has established a specific program to train potential workers within the required technologies. This project of battery cell productions promotes the creation of 2.500 job possibilities for the area and increases production for nearby related industries, such as nickel, graphite, and silicon (Arendal Kommune, 2021).

Additionally, the area would benefit from population growth, providing entrepreneurial opportunities to sectors such as real estate, schools, and local businesses. Population growth is significant for the location because, since the decline in the boat and shipping industry, the location has experienced challenges in preventing the locals from moving to other cities seeking jobs (Isaksen, 2016).

4.1.2 Norwegian industry labor: benefits and challenges

Work as a social phenomenon is related to the relationship of mutual dependence between actors. The relation is characterized by responsibilities and expectations, normally established in a contract (Campbell & Applebaum, 1994).

Norway hosts a population of over five million people, from which 68.9% are registered as employed. Workers in Norway are entitled to benefits and support such as 12 months parental leave for each child, sickness benefits, and 25 vacation days, amongst other benefits, as established in the Working Environment Act (Lovdata.no, 2021).

Within the many industries, the Norwegian labor force is highly organized; over half of workers are registered as members of trade unions (Statistics Norway, 2021). Therefore, Norwegian labor is commonly characterized as highly regulated and oriented to social-democratic values. Most relevant decisions regarding labor result from deliberations between actors of a tripartite model. The Nordic model within industrial contexts is highly centralized (Engen, 2019, pp. 258-259).

The shareholders are composed of the state, trade unions, and employers. This system is meant to balance power asymmetries between these sectors (Hansen, 2022). In other words, the tripartite system constitutes collective decision-making between three parts, believed to be based on cooperation, trust, and common understanding (Engen, 2019, pp. 259-260).

Within the Norwegian context, according to Engen (2019), this model appears reflected also in other spheres of Norwegian society, such as wage negotiation and state contribution to research and the development and management of numerous Norwegian enterprises.

However, the oil crisis of 2014 resulted in massive layoffs. Rogaland County was one of the most affected areas since it traditionally hosts most oil and gas workers. Additionally, in 2015, significant decisions and changes in the Working Environment Act were taken without including trade unions (Steen, 2015).

For researchers concerned with Norwegian industry labor, such as Ryggvik (2010, pp. 60-69), as well as McNeish and Logan (2015), it was never clear what the Nordic model means in practice for the development of the oil and gas sector. These researchers provided nuances surrounding the Norwegian oil experience that question the probability of duplicating this 'model'. The authors point out that many factors and actors involved in establishing this industry in Norway possessed a great element of luck: the historical and political timing was good. The impacts on climate and environment of this industry were not fully understood at the starting time, which allowed this highly profitable industry to become greatly supported by the Norwegian legal framework and authorities (Ryggvik, 2018a).

Houeland and Jordhus-Lier (2021) remark in their research that industry workers of the Norwegian oil and gas sector had a rough start back in the 1970s. The emerging industry was

characterized by “cowboy” culture from the experts from the USA, that used incentives and punishment methods bound to an intense pressure for high productivity.

The oil and gas sector started as high-risk industry, entailing intense working hours under difficult weather conditions, and the uncertainties of an industry with little experience in the field. Learning by doing was the day-to-day approach, until Norwegian workers together with authorities developed better safety frames and technologies to endure the conditions at sea (Houeland & Jordhus-Lier, 2021).

Unfortunately, many catastrophes occurred within the Norwegian oil and gas sector. The development of safety in the energy sector came as a result of failure and accidents (Qian et al., 2011). The most well-known is the Alexander Kielland accident, with 123 casualties. The accident remains the second biggest within the petroleum industry worldwide (Offshore Technology, 2019).

However, prior to the Alexander Kielland accident, workers had already experienced the hardships of industrial development. Fatal accidents affected industrial workers during various phases of their work. Deep-sea divers at risk, helicopter accidents, and platforms with malfunctions all represent a part of the human cost of the oil and gas industry in Norway (Besnard & Albrechtsen, 2018).

The oil and gas industry represented job opportunities within a field known to pay good salaries. However, this sector is associated with risks, from the transportation in helicopters to the work on platforms under harsh weather conditions. A working day on an oil platform entails long hours exposed to intensity and pressure to produce results in a sector that never stops (Okstad et al., 2012).

As a consequence of many casualties, the safety regulations stated in the Petroleum Act concerning upstream activities¹¹ constitute a set of laws that resulted from the hard lessons

¹¹ Upstream activities are activities regarding the preliminary steps of oil and gas extraction, also known as exploration and production (Thune et al., 2018)

regarding risk and safety issues encountered by industry workers in the field (Thune et al., 2018).

Currently, the Norwegian oil and gas industry workers are protected by the following laws: the Petroleum Act, the Pollution Control Act, and the Working Environment Act. These legal frameworks specify the risk and performance requirements as a functional description, where each industry can choose the method to cover the stipulated requirements to guarantee the safety of their workers (Forseth & Rosness, 2021).

The regulations for safety regarding downstream activities¹² are stipulated in the Working environment Act, the Fire and Explosion Protection Act, the Electrical Supervision Act, and relevant regulations related to this legislation. Questions surrounding the development of fair conditions for industry workers belong to an extensive field of economic interests, social-political struggles, and different understandings behind the creation of fair conditions for industry workers. Workers' safety within Norwegian industries did not evolve without a cost, the price paid in flesh and blood by industry workers (Besnard & Albrechtsen, 2018; Falkum, 2020; Thune et al., 2018).

4.1.3 Norwegian Trade unions related to industries

The equilibrium between workers' interests and the interest of the employer is often possible due to the intervention of trade unions. Historically, for Norwegian industry workers, trade unions have represented a tool of power to defend their interests, providing enough weight to balance power asymmetries, at least to a certain degree (Ryggvik, 2010).

In Norway, the first labor union resulted from grass-root initiatives, for example, the efforts of Marcus Thrane and the consequent formation in 1848 of the Drammen Labour Union (Falkum, 2020). Currently, over half of Norwegian workers are members of a union. However, the

¹² Downstream activities constitute the ones concerning converting oil and gas into a finished product, in which the risk for explosion and exposure to hazardous chemicals is high (Thune et al., 2018).

beginning was a challenging process. The first union was suppressed by the ruling forces at the time and Thrane was imprisoned and accused of being a socialist agitator.

Thrane appealed for political representation of the working classes in the parliament. Norwegian workers from the middle 1800s did not have voting rights, when Norway was in the starting process of becoming an independent nation after their constitution in 1814. Thrane's initiative points to interesting social elements to understand the Norwegian reality at the time: Norway constituted a society with class divisions and inequalities (Ringvej, 2019). The workers at the time represented the most oppressed share of the population (Ringvej, 2019; Roos, 2018).

It was not until 1872 that an organization of workers would take place again, this time represented by the voices of print workers. Later, in 1899, LO (labour organization) was founded, inspired by similar organizations developing in Sweden and Denmark (Kjellberg, 1999).

The formation of trade unions in Norway can be divided into four main periods: the first period from 1900 to 1930 was marked by social struggles, strikes, and conflicts that resulted in the creation of labor organizations, trade unions, and the coalition of LO and the labor party AP.

The second period from 1930 to 1980 entailed several important events for national industry, including the creation of a welfare system and the emergence of the petroleum industry. This was a strong state-regulated period (Falkum, 2020). The labor party had great significance as a representant of workers' interests in the parliament. However, workers in general were affected by legislative changes in the working laws, changes that followed the international commercial trends towards a more open, globalized, and liberalized market. This led to the third period.

The third period from 1980 to 2010 represents the market liberalization period, where the working laws suffered modifications to adjust to the conditions of a more liberal market where competition is strong and personal development is key to achieve success as workers (Falkum, 2020).

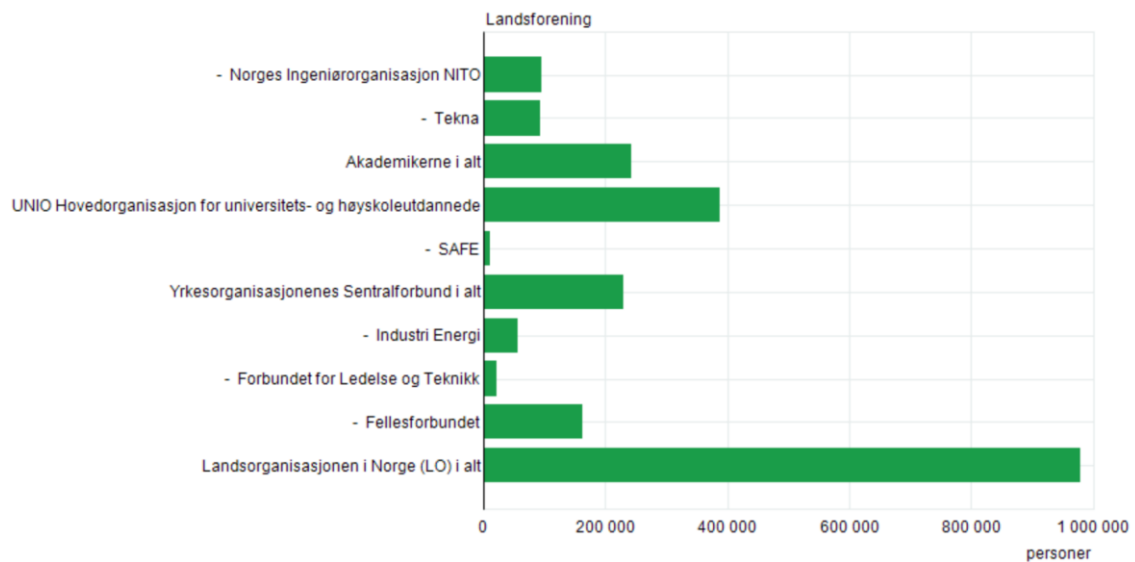
Currently in Norway, employers can support their interests through the confederation of Norwegian enterprise (NHO) which is an employer's association created in 1989 (Bowman, 2005). This organization helps employers with legal advice regarding employment and general

human resources management within the frames of the Norwegian Working Environment Act. The organization is meant to provide support in navigating the political environment locally and nationally, as well as information regarding new agreements for wages.

	Medlemer
	2021
Landsorganisasjonen i Norge (LO) i alt	978 338
- Fellesforbundet	161 650
- Forbundet for Ledelse og Teknikk	21 019
- Industri Energi	56 165
Yrkesorganisasjonenes Sentralforbund i alt	230 348
- SAFE	10 289
UNIO Hovedorganisasjon for universitets- og høyskoleutdannede	388 220
Akademikerne i alt	243 293
- Tekna	93 229
- Norges Ingeniørorganisasjon NITO	96 067

Table 2 Trade unions related to industry. Source SSB table 03546.

03546: Hovudsamanslutningane for arbeidstakarar og andre landsomfattande arbeidstakarorganisasjonar. Medlemer per 31. desember, etter Landsforening. Medlemer, 2021.



Kilde: Statistisk sentralbyrå

Figure 8 Table 2 presented as a bar chart

4.1.4 Hierarchy and differences between industry workers

Workers represent the most vulnerable social class. Falkum (2020) presented workers as placed at the low end of the hierarchical chain, the ones depending on remunerations to survive, and the quality of working conditions could vary based on the values of employers. Falkum (2020) expresses that power is attached to determine understandings of reality. The normative power to express what is right for workers and must be defended, supported, and expanded, as well as what is negative and therefore must be avoided, rests in those that have the power to make such changes in understandings (Falkum, 2020, p. 202). Within Marx's understanding of power, the difference is determined by those that have capital and possessions and those that do not have capital and possessions (p. 206). The Norwegian system often involves the tripartite model to balance power differences. Still, the labor market within industry is divided by differences in wages according to professions, skills, and sometimes depending on which union the worker belongs to (Falkum, 2020).

The focus is often placed on the oil and gas industry. However, Norway produces numerous products at industrial levels, such as seafood, mining of several minerals,¹³ timber, an advanced maritime and shipping industry, and hydropower. In all these sectors, industry workers fulfill an essential role maintaining the different industries as functional elements for the sustainability of the Norwegian economy and society (Adamson, 1952; Regjering, 2021).

Traditionally, in referring to industry workers two categories come to mind: blue-collar workers, and white-collar workers. The first mentioned commonly perform and engage in hard physical activities, generally with lower levels of education, and they generally receive a lower pay. An example of this category would be operators in a factory. The blue-collar worker is usually portrayed as the most active class involved in trade unions (Hennequin, 2007).

¹³ Norwegian extractive industries related to minerals have increased their production in the last decade. So-called green industries demand increasingly more minerals such as nickel (the Norwegian nickel is promoted as one of the greenest in the world), graphite, copper, gold, vanadium, and many other elements (Müller et al., 2022).

The second mentioned category is related to office work stereotypically separated from the blue-collar worker by status associated with high education and professions that enable higher wages (for example, engineers, IT specialists, consultants, and lawyers). Knowledge and hierarchy between white-collar workers and blue-collar workers typically placed the white-collar worker in management positions; for example, as leaders and chiefs (Bourbonnais et al., 1996).

4.2 Rogaland County and the development of the oil and gas industry

Rogaland County, located on the southwest coast of Norway, is an area divided into 23 municipalities. Stavanger represents the administrative center of the county. The region is connected to the rest of Norway by ports, airports, train lines, and highways, and has developed a large upstream oil and gas industry since the late 1960s (Sasson & Blomgren, 2011).

Before oil and gas, the area had an industrial trajectory, producing, exporting, and importing goods. Now, Rogaland County is the area with most workers related to the oil and gas industry, as shown in the comparative graph below. As already mentioned, the profitability of hydrocarbons represented and still represents high profitability for Norway's economy, and currently no other sector provides this level of revenues. To place the economic significance within a quantitative context, the country established in 1990 a Sovereign Wealth Fund, which currently has 1.1 trillion us dollars. The oil and gas industry contributes great part of this wealth (Backer, 2009).

Rogaland County is the area with most workers related to the oil and gas industry, as shown in this comparative graph:

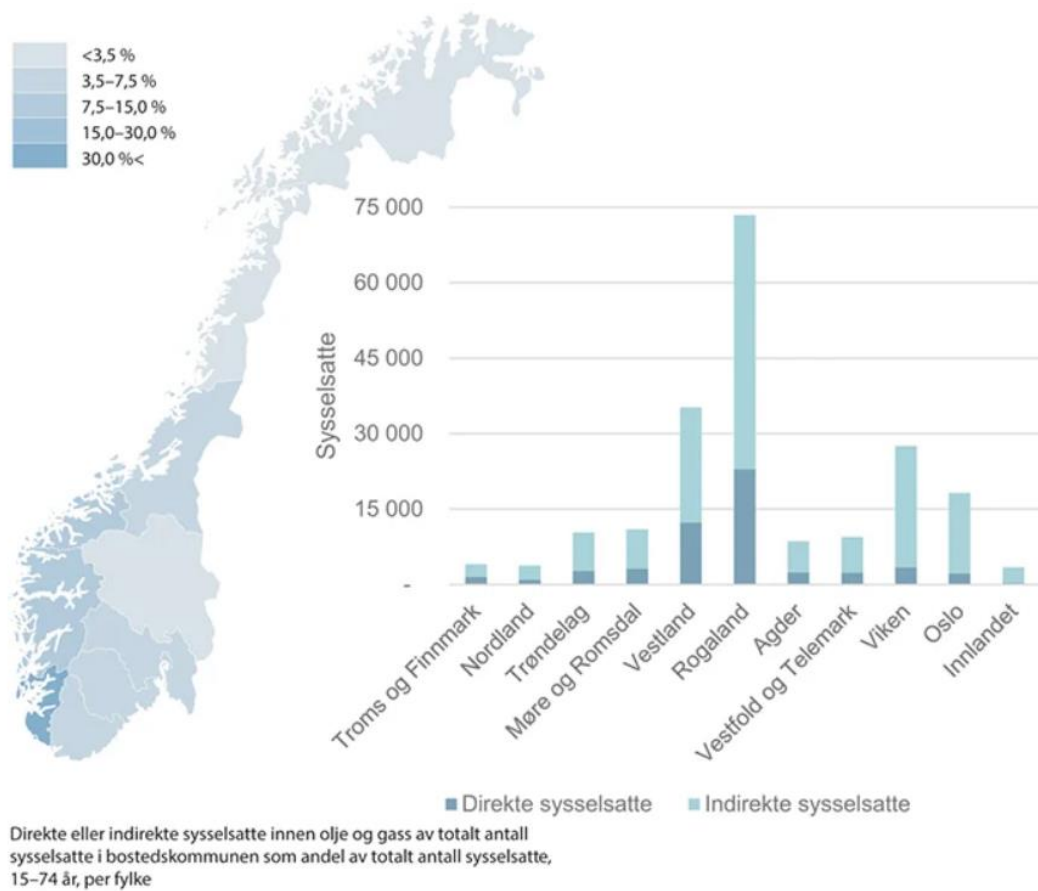


Figure 9 Number of workers related to petroleum in Norway, source Menon economics, 2021

Understanding the impacts of the petroleum industry in Rogaland entails acknowledging a general sense of national pride related to have created a successful oil and gas industry from scratch (Ryggvik, 2018b).

There were several challenges involved in the establishment of the oil and gas field, such as the management and organization of extraction of hydrocarbons on the rigs, as well as side-industries that result from petroleum (i.e., as the side-industries in charge of the exploration phase and transportation phase). These new industries represented opportunities for growth and jobs for the industry workers of the area (Baptista & Leitão, 2015; Regjering, 2020; Ryggvik, 2015a).

4.3 Laws from hydropower

Norwegian state involvement in the energy industry has been extensive and visible in the state ownership in the traditional public service sectors. For many decades, the infrastructure and robust economy of the energy sector had no pressure to privatize or commercialize for financial reasons. The state's involvement in Norwegian industry is a tradition prior to the century's shift toward hydrocarbons, starting with the establishment of infrastructure services (postal services, public roads, telegraph, communications). From those services, it developed the introduction of the concession laws, established between 1906 and 1917, to safeguard public interests regarding electricity from the exploitation of energy from Norway's waterfalls (Ryggvik, 2015b).

The development of hydropower in Norway represented an important event to support the development of other industries, supplying relatively cheap energy, and providing experience in the management of the energy field and the interests of the public sector (Graabak et al., 2017).

Hydropower is known as one of Norway's most effective renewable energy sources. The country counts over 1.600 power plants and is currently the largest hydropower producer in Europe. With a production capacity of 31.000 MW (Megawatts), it is the sixth largest globally. While developing hydropower, the Norwegian industry developed a legal system that would prove helpful to the future management of resources and industries in terms of state intervention and legal frameworks for the administration of natural resources (Graabak et al., 2017).

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the hydropower boom prompted the development of industries in Norway by granting access to cheap electricity. Provided with optimal conditions for harnessing hydropower, the development of hydro plants grew rapidly. The many waterfalls represented the potential for growth and expansion of industry; as such, it confronted the interests of the State with those of society and the private sector.

With some challenges ahead to make fair use of water resources, the State created a set of laws that would define water resources as public (owned by the State), claiming to benefit the majority (Hveding et al., 1992). The implementations of these laws were not well-received by all sectors. According to Hveding (1992), some landowners wanted to administrate the waterfalls that pass through their lands as part of their properties.

The establishment of the concession laws shown a contested battle between political differences; the conservative values of the right were oriented to protect the interests of the private sector and encourages entrepreneurship, and the socialist values of the left sought equal social conditions, collectivism, social participation, and universal welfare (Allern et al., 2007; Allern, 2013).

The debates surrounding the management of public resources, in this case, water, ended with the approval of the concession laws, also known as "panic Laws," in 1906, to define the rights over natural resources, such as waterfalls above the specific energy capacity, as State-owned.

The development of the concept of concession laws, according to Stjern (2021), aimed to achieve two main goals. The first goal was to prevent foreign investors from controlling national resources, but it also affected private investors by preventing them from claiming ownership over waterfalls.

The second goal was the establishment of a legal framework that came after a long political debate, as pointed out in the waterfalls rights Act No. 16: "Under Norwegian law, river systems have from the very beginning been subject to private ownership. This principle is now laid down in the first paragraph of Section 13 of Act No 82 of 24 November 2000 Relating to River Systems and Groundwater where it is stated:

"A river system belongs to the owner of the land it covers, unless otherwise dictated by special legal status. The private ownership rights are, however, limited by public law which inter alia subjects the exploitation and acquisition of waterfalls to concession requirements." (Stjern, 2021).

4.4 The beginnings of the oil and gas industry: power asymmetries and the state

Even though the popular understanding of Norway tells the story of an egalitarian land, this notion is challenged by the descriptions of historical processes of the establishment of the oil and gas industry (Ryggvik, 2015a). Ryggvik (2015) shows a Norway with social divisions, defined by the degree of power to defend interests in the different social positions.

Norwegian elements of power within the petroleum industry are often portrayed as political (legislative) influence or/and economic influence. Ryggvik (2015) points out the different

Norwegian strategies regarding the control of national involvement in the hydrocarbon industry.

In 1965, during the first allocation round that compromised seventy-nine blocks, the Norwegian government prevented national actors from taking too many blocks but was willing to allow many international actors on the Norwegian continental shelf, because nobody yet knew the magnitude of hydrocarbons Norway possessed. The administration assumed that the international companies could afford to take that risk, even though Norway's most important individual in the private sector, Fred Olsen, and the most prominent Norwegian industrial powerhouse at the time, Norsk Hydro, were willing to get a strong position in the first allocation round (Ryggvik, 2015a).

Authorities at the time were prudent in not allowing national actors to take control of large areas. However, the picture changed drastically soon after the discovery of the Ekofisk reservoirs. The Norwegian administration understood that state involvement was necessary to control the new industry, and the agreement came from politicians (Ryggvik, 2015b, pp. 5-8).

The former center-right political leaders supported granting the dominant position on the Norwegian shelf to Norsk Hydro (p. 5-8) Norsk Hydro believed that individuals' connections could also determine their power and influence a positive outcome. According to Ryggvik, 2015, more than 50% of the shares had been bought in secret to ensure Norwegian control in October 1970. However, in 1971 the Labour Party took over the administration. It soon started working towards establishing a new state-owned oil company, taking control by outlining the Norwegian oil policy (also known as the ten commands), which ended in the creation of Statoil (Ryggvik, 2015a). This enterprise is known today as Equinor, an enterprise that promotes itself by stating the significant number of fossil fuel beneficiaries from its production, currently 170 million people according to its webpage (Equinor, 2022).

Statoil AS was established in 1972. Later, in response to the banking crisis in the late 1980s, the state became involvement in the commercial banking sector, and until the year 2000 the government retained 47.28 % of shares in the largest commercial bank of Scandinavia, Den Norske Bank (DnB). Currently the state owns a total share of 32% (Larsen, 2000). The government and the state as manager of the most significant Norwegian industries and

companies has been part of the norm for Norway and the administration of Norwegian society for a long time (Lie, 2016). National control over resources and assets has been a sort of a trademark for Norwegian social democratic values. However, Norway began a process towards liberalization of industry in general because of the EEA agreement and subsequently the regulatory framework that is part of that agreement including competition rules supervised by European Fair-Trade Association (EFTA) (Falkum, 2020; Rye, 2017).

The transition from state-owned and/or state-managed industry to the ever-increasing involvement of the private sector is an ongoing process in Norwegian society. This transition is central in the *Green Shift* that is taking place, and continues to have profound impacts on industry workers, both in the older hydrocarbon industries and in the new so-called green industries that are being developed in Norway.

5 Analysis and Results

This chapter is divided into four main sections, where each section presents a resulting theme from the data, supported by corresponding quotes from the participants. These themes and subthemes grew out of the intensive process of engaging critically with the data. After coding the data in Atlas.ti, these themes and subthemes were easily identified. Furthermore, the opinions and perceptions of the participants are placed in discussion with relevant documents, such as The White Paper nr. 36 and The Working Environment Act, that were analyzed within the chosen theoretical frameworks, which are discourse and class divisions. The analysis of the data resulted in four themes and a various subtheme that I will explain under each section. The four themes were: ‘plan’, ‘cooperation’, ‘competition’, and ‘crises. The order of the themes in this chapter presents the themes from less conflictive to highly conflictive.

The information emerging from implicit and explicit uses of the language constructed different perceptions regarding each theme. Therefore, each theme resulted in subthemes representing the different participants’ views: the subthemes for ‘plan’ are ‘continuity’, ‘skill-building’, ‘re-building’, and ‘outsourcing’. The subthemes for ‘cooperation’ are ‘support’ ‘partnership’, ‘acceptance’, and ‘flexibility’. The theme ‘competition’ resulted in the subthemes ‘struggle’, ‘benefits’, ‘inequality’ and ‘individualism’. The final theme, crisis, has the subthemes ‘opportunity’, ‘threat’, ‘losses, and ‘growth’. Due to the use of critical discourse analysis during the coding process, explaining the context where discourse is generated provides key information in understanding participants’ views. I add observations to provide richness regarding the context of the texts. The conclusion highlights and discusses contrasts and agreements between the participants pointing towards impacts and opportunities to respond my research questions:

- Recognizing the challenges and opportunities for industry workers in the Green Shift in Norway.
- Evaluating through qualitative methods how Norwegian trade unions are preparing to defend industry workers’ interests in the new emerging ‘green’ industrial sector.

At the end of this chapter, the theme crisis is more extensive than the other three themes due to the many contrasts and discrepancies exposed in participants' understandings, perceptions, and outcomes of the theme.

5.1 Analysis of the theme "Plan"

The theme 'plan' refers to different strategies expressed by the participants to achieve specific goals in relation to current and future situations within the context of the Green Shift, the oil and gas sector, and the future related to relevant workers within this sector.

The theme also reflects on discrepancies between plan as a collective enterprise, and individual plans to achieve personal goals. The theme resulted in the following subthemes:

- **Continuity**: this refers to participants' (often politicians and investors) intent to maintain value creation, high profits from oil and gas, and growth from the new initiatives.
- **Skill-building**: this reflects on participants' need to make themselves capable, employable, and able to engage with new industries.
- **Re-building power**: this subtheme is concerned with statements that alluded to a growing need for increasing the levels of trust, especially amongst the group of trade union representatives. The explicit goal for trade unions aims at gaining more members in order to have enough representative power in negotiations.
- **Outsourcing**: this refers to participants expressing a sense of passing responsibility to others; something or someone else has to plan and/or control outcomes related to workers, systems, or laws.

The differences in participants' perceptions of what, where, and who has agency designing a plan, are examined in correlation with the CDA approach. Different understandings of a fair transition resulted in different plan designs: for some, a fair Green Shift entails equity and social justice, while for others it entails economic stability, or finding a profitable and successful economic alternative to the oil and gas industries.

The Norwegian model is part of the discussion presented in this section, mentioned by political actors, trade union representatives, one of the participants of the group investors, and workers. It is also suggested in official documents reflecting on statements that suggest the existence of a ‘master plan’ designed to contain potential challenges for industry workers as well as for the rest of society. The analysis of ‘plan’ is discussed together within the theoretical frameworks of discourse and class division.

5.1.1 The group of politicians and the theme plan

The different interviewees from the group of politicians showed a confident understanding that Norway has a well-established plan to tackle challenges regarding economy and labor in a future moving towards a greener economy. Addressing who politicians refer to when they mention *Norway*, revealed the understood agent of change as ‘the state’. The state is understood for politicians as being in control, as well as being held responsible for the function of the Norwegian plan.

‘We in Norway have a thing called ‘*the Norwegian model*’ that solves almost any possible crisis; therefore, the role of **the state** is crucial to find solutions that keep a reasonable (*fornuftig*) balance’.¹⁴

The language used by legal and political actors, as expressed in the voices of participants from the group of politicians and as observed in documents that take place in this analysis referred to Norway and the state as one indivisible agent. A state that is safe with regards to the coming ‘*challenges of the Green Shift*’,¹⁵ due to capital accumulation from hydrocarbons. The SWF is the element (*oljefondet*) that puts Norway in a good position regarding the future, as expressed by this political participant:

“We, in Norway, have many advantages that other countries don’t have to confront the years to come, also, I mean... To tackle climate change: first we have enough economic

¹⁴ IO nr 3 of the group politicians, excel sheet nr. 7 “the Norwegian model”

¹⁵ 46 participants from all groups referred to *the Green Shift* as a challenge.

resources from years of good administration of the wealth from hydrocarbons, revenues from oil in the fantastic creation of the oil fund, that places us as a robust economy, secondly we have green power, because Norwegian energy comes from hydropower, and ultimately we have a culture based on traditions oriented towards dialogue and solutions more than confrontation and conflicts, so there is no need to panic here, let the Green Shift come (*la det Grønne Skifte kome*).¹⁶

The statement also shows that this political participant understands that the Norwegian wealth accumulated in the SWF provides Norway with enough economic tools to endure the potential economic challenges of a change. Later, the same participant expresses that Norway's pacific culture provides the country with a particular advantage to administrate conflicts related to changes. Ultimately, the participant understands that, because Norway's domestic energy is green, the problem of *the Green Shift* is not something that concerns the land.

“We in Norway...” The interview started with the participant asking where I come from. For this participant, my ethnicity was part of establishing an us-them division, in which establishing the superiority of Norway compared to the rest, was a repetitive element expressed as a solid fact. From my perspective as interviewer, the goal was to help the participant to feel comfortable to talk freely.

For this participant, the superiority of Norway is reflected in Norway's capacity of administration. Defending hydrocarbon industries in Norway has an economic logic, because the revenues from oil and gas are robust. Thus, hydrocarbons in Norway are not seen as the problem, but as a form of rescue and solution for the challenges to come. The good administration of the Norwegian wealth constitutes part of the pride of this participant. Whereas the imperative necessity for a transition is expressed as something to be tackled, as trouble in the paradise of wealth from hydrocarbons.

¹⁶ IO 39 from the group of politicians, excel sheet nr. 28

The participant also mentions Norwegian cultural values as something to be proud of as a Norwegian, although values are mentioned in a general manner, where it is difficult to identify the concrete meaning of those values. When asked for clarity, the participant referred to people's conflict avoidance, 'we are civil and oriented to solve problems, not to make noise', as a positive baseline to tackle challenges and difficulties, as expressed in the last sentence of the above mentioned quote: 'Nothing to panic about here, let the Green Shift come (*la det Grønne Skifte kome*)' The statement implies that when the time comes, people's cultural background (for this participant passivism is understood as civil) would move towards compromise instead of fighting.

Another political interlocutor explained that the safety of workers' interests lies in the law. The participant also blends the element of trust as a cultural fact exclusive of the Norwegian context:

“Norway **has** constructed a **solid legal framework** that **protects** the employees from potential exploitative investors. **We have** managed to establish a well-organized workforce **that trusts the system** and **the system trusts** the function of the workers. It's a two-way relation that so far has worked without major bumps in the road.”¹⁷

I asked about the changes in the Working Act in 2015, for which this participant proceeded to explain that those were expected side effects of the political current in power at the time: That was an exception to the rule. The ones to be blamed, according to this participant, were those on the right: “always defending the private sector, typical right-wing” (*De alltid kommer til å forsvare private investeringer. Det der er typisk Høyre*).¹⁸

This blame on the political current at the time reveals a contradiction: first, the participant is sure about workers' safety laws in an unbreakable legal framework, but later states that is not that unbreakable after all, pointing out that this is the case only insofar as the right is not in power. Later, the participant refers to a two-way system of trust between workers and 'the

¹⁷ IO nr. 3 from politicians, excel sheet nr. 7a

¹⁸ IO nr. 3 from politicians, excel sheet nr. 7c

system’, although it is not clear who the system is. Applying the CDA approach entails considering the cultural context of the text. Understanding as text the transcription of this interview resulted in the following elements: the interview was taken at the time when the right was the political party in power, and the measures for protecting the private sector due to the COVID-19 lockdowns were highly criticized by center and left-wing parties in Norway.

Furthermore, this interviewee expresses a general sense of distrust, seeing green industries as part of the government’s strategies to protect the private sector rather than an attempt to find a solution to climate change:

“To be totally honest (...) all this constant pressure for establishing green industries, you named the batteries for example, is not about the CO2 goals, I bet there are private interests and monetary outcomes that benefit the same old rich. That is about to change, just wait and you’ll see.”

For this participant, there is a correlation between the measurements to protect investors under the COVID-19 crisis and the *Green Shift*. An exchange, for this participant, where the interests of workers are not reflected but pressed towards precarity. The counterpart of this statement, from the angle of discourse theory, highlights that (for this participant) the missing competence lays on what the participant understands as the correct political view and values, participant’s own. This participant also shows an understanding of a clear class division related to Norwegian politics

: (...) “I bet there are private interests and monetary outcomes that benefit **the same old rich**. That is about to change, just wait and you’ll see.”

The sense of a plan for this participant relates to achieving political goals, entailing that the solution for ensuring safe working conditions depends on politics and how these political values and ideas play out from the executive power. Thus, the subtheme ‘re-building’ is connected to political power, a sort of restoration of trust that this interviewee understands as important for workers’ interests.

Another participant provided informative statements to understand what the *Green Shift* represents for this political actor. The interview took place at the interviewee's office. The wall was decorated with pictures of the different Norwegian oil platforms, a diploma, and different pieces of abstract art. The interview started sharp on time with a cup of coffee:

“I see some extra difficulties for the years to come, because of the increasing pressure for establishing green industries in Norway. **The *Green Shift* meets us** with an economy heavily relying on hydrocarbons, and that is not going to change tomorrow nor in the next decade. We have some other industries, but it is difficult to replace the economic stability that oil and gas represents for Norway”(…)“Technology needs time to attain perfection, still I believe that we have **technology** on our side, carbon sequestration for example, that may not be perfect today, but I'm confident that if we give it time, it **will become a solid solution for the CO2 problem**. To employ our people, we need initiatives here in the country, green, blue, you name it, we need to diversify the economy, there is no doubt about it”.¹⁹

This participant understands the *Green Shift* as an external problem pressured upon the Norwegian well-functioning economy and social system, now forced to re-consider the oil and gas sector. For this participant, the primary problem is not climate change, so the idea of a plan relates to ensuring wealth and a stable economy. Additionally, the participant stated that the plan for the oil and gas industry is to continue. Therefore, to solve the problem that the *Green Shift* represents, technology must find a way to fix the CO2 'problem'. The plan, for this participant, relates to continuity as a subtheme, the continuity of wealth regardless of climate change. Although not directly opposed to green industries, the way the interviewee referred to *the Green Shift* indicates that the participant understands green industries as parallel industries to profit from in addition to oil and gas. In other words, green industries seem for this actor are 'just' another investment. There are many linguistic elements that indicate that this participant

¹⁹ IO 2, group politicians, excel sheet nr. 2b

does not see the *Green Shift* as a necessary transition, but as an understandable alternative to achieve more profits.

What does this perception mean for industry workers involved in the *Green Shift*? The ideas of ‘a plan’ expressed by this political interviewee regarding green industries fails to create a sense of commitment toward solving the bigger problem: climate change. This goal of protecting ‘jobs’ in any form and color apparently points towards a well-intended social concern, namely guaranteed employment. However, the ‘plan’ is about protecting profit and industries that create the most profitable outcomes; in the case of Norway, this means protecting the oil and gas sector. The green-collar worker under this perception is just another industrial worker, from one of *those* green initiatives. This approach fails to encourage Norwegian labor to move towards a conscious transition; it rather indicates that the so-called climate jobs are just jobs.

5.1.2 The group of workers and the theme plan

The understandings of “plan” amongst workers connected mostly to ‘skill-building’ related to personal growth, relevant knowledge, and expertise to increase employability options. Although the green industries were mentioned sometimes as the jobs of the future, most of the interviewed industry workers understood the oil and gas sector as ‘the real deal’ in Norway.

Among interviewees from the group of workers connected to the oil and gas industries, the ideas of a ‘plan’ to guarantee themselves a job within the *Green Shift* indicated two different currents: those that plan to continue working within the oil and gas, extractive industries, and those that consider a change. The first mentioned group was in quantitative terms the most prominent. Here are some of the quotes:

“My understanding of the *Green Shift* in Norway is that it needs the economic support from the oil and gas industry. The finances needed to establish green industries here in the country are mainly supported by the accumulated wealth *we managed to create*”.²⁰

²⁰ IO 12 group of workers, excel sheet nr 12

“There is no possible way to think about a transition without fossil fuels, all industries you can think of today depend at some point on the direct or indirect support of fossil fuels. In addition, the high standards of safety and technology within the oil and gas industry in Norway, places us as greener than any other petroleum land”.²¹

“Let’s imagine for a moment that we shut down all the platforms... It’s not possible to do something like that. It’s very sweet to see the growing concern for the environment amongst young people, they have many privileges here in Norway thanks to the oil and gas industry they claim to hate so much. If we don’t produce, then the middle East would control this field. Is that a good scenario? I don’t think so”.²²

The statements above belong to three workers from the oil and gas sector that present different arguments and ideas advocating for the continuity of oil and gas as necessary for making a transition ‘in the future’. These participants indicated understandings of ‘plan’ as related to the current industry they work for. Remaining in their jobs provides them with the satisfaction of working for a sector that, from their perspective, is enabling green industries in the country. However, none of them mentioned phasing out the oil and gas industries and transitioning towards a future post-fossil fuel Norwegian society.

In the case of the last participant, there are also elements of international politics in keeping the oil and gas industry strong in Norway: “If (oil and gas) not from Norway, then we give too much power to other that are not exactly on the same page in terms of democratic values. Is that a good scenario? I don’t think so”.

²¹IO 13 group of workers, excel sheet nr 13

²² IO nr7 group of workers, excel sheet nr. 5-7

5.1.3 The group of trade unions and the theme plan

Most participants from the group of trade unions saw themselves as part of a plan, connecting with the subthemes ‘continuity’ and ‘re-building’ in some cases, as the following statement shows:

“Norway’s stability is the result of a long history of cooperation and trust. We had some fights in the past, we always need to be aware of certain political trends, like now the leading right, which represents a challenge because of Høyre’s (the right) relation with greed. There are many financial opportunities out there. Not all of these ‘opportunities’²³ are good fish for Norway. We have at the end of the day a bulletproof welfare system, as is noticeable after surviving all of these “blue”²⁴ years, also the Norwegian way of cooperation between employers, government, and unions; that is the base and essence, if you wish, of what Norway is, regardless of who is in charge... And we must keep it that way. As far as trade unions remain strong, the workers have their backs covered”.²⁵

This participant understands trade unions as an effective and active element in the equation of the Norwegian model. The responsibility to defend worker’s interests has, according to this view, trade unions as one of the main pillars of the model, as a plan that works to maintain the balance between interests. The participant also refers to the Norwegian “long history of cooperation”, without explaining what that history entails. There is in this statement a suggested battle in the past, from which workers emerged victorious due to the strength of organization. This assumption reflects a present and future of potential challenges, but challenges that are controllable by the strength of the Norwegian welfare system and trade unions.

Furthermore, the participant reflects on the role of politics and political views as a threat that needs to be addressed from time to time, implying that the right-wing political parties are the biggest threat. They are something to be held in check (at the time of the interview, the right

²³ The interviewee formed brackets with the hands while mentioning the word.

²⁴ Referring to the colors of the political party of the right

²⁵ IO 11, Trade unions, excel sheet nr. 8a

was at the leading government). This suggests that the other parties, especially the ones representing left-wing values, will not face the same temptations. This statement, in the light of Foucauldian discourse, points at politicians as responsible for cooperating with the interests of investors, to keep the balance between the three parts of the model. This self-understanding of being part of the Norwegian plan from the inside appears to project, at some level, Marx's definition of trade unions as the power equalizer or regulator. The interviewee also refers to the power of capital as a counterforce "out there" when ideologies of certain parties are in power.

5.1.4 The group of investors and the theme plan

Some investors reflected during the interview on the positive outcomes for their companies in a strongly regulated work market such as Norway. Most investors made visible that the aim of their green initiatives is to establish profitable investments and guarantee value production.

The senses of a plan for guaranteeing just and fair jobs for industry workers are pointed out as being Norway's responsibility. Furthermore, the positive outcomes are presented in this case from the perspective of the company: what's in it for us? Investors' show that as part of a value creation strategy, the country's legal framework results in something positive for the industry: (We) "follow the rules in Norway"; the plan for labor safety, however, is someone else's plan.

The logic of following the plan is apparently based on Norwegian cultural assumptions of loyalty to their workplaces, because of permanent positions, productivity because of safety, and safety because of productivity. The Norwegian working laws are pointed out as being responsible for a regulated workforce and to guarantee work safety. What the company intends is to have productive workers, and the goal is profitability: **"whatever works, as long as they produce"**.

The following interview from the group investors took place via zoom, and it was recorded. I came back to the video to observe and hear. The interviewee chose a background with the name of the company and dressed formally. Although analyzing human gestures via zoom proposes some challenges, the length of the interview and the engagement of the interviewee showed me that the participant was comfortable, cooperative, and talkative.

“Reflecting on HR (human resources) and our company, it’s extremely important for us to follow the rules in Norway, workers inside a regulated system are normally loyal to the firm, our aim is to work with people that stay working with us, because we invest in capacitation and it would be a waste to capacitate workers that just think to work for short periods, so we have a clear vision when employing people that we want them to stay. Also, if workers within a safe working environment (contracts) produce, then that is our logic, get people that produce and enjoy what they do... Most skillful workers today come from abroad, but we need operators as well... If they wish to grow in our company, then they have to capacitate, but it is good to work as an operator, I’m not saying it is a bad position and we are committed to plan our HR strategies in a way that they work for us and stay with us. Whatever works as far as they produce...”²⁶

Analyzing this statement in the light of class division makes noticeable the capitalist pursuit of surplus value; workers are for investors, as an element in the equation of capital accumulation. This participant investor from within green industry in Norway expresses a sense of us/them, explaining a relation of give and take between employer and employee. On the one hand, the employee gets capacitation to obtain better positions in the company. On the other hand, investors are willing to provide opportunities “better than operators”, but in exchange they expect loyal workers willing to stay with the firm. However, when this participant expresses the logic of investing in capacitation in permanent positions, production is presented as principal outcome: if workers within a safe environment produce... then we invest... This is a reasoning that concurs with the description of capitalist elites: the goal is capital accumulation and surplus value.

The proletarians, according to Marx, belong to a precarious social class that exists in relation to their labor, if they work and are functional according to the employer’s views.

Interviewer: “How do you guarantee that safety for workers concretely?”

²⁶ IO 51, group investors, excel sheet nr. 51.

Interviewee: Through contracts, a regulated workforce seems to be the Norwegian way. To me, that egalitarian Norwegian system is something new, you know? I come from working in very competitive companies, where you must fight for your position and prove you are the right person for the job. At the same time, there is this constant feeling that behind you stand many younger, newer, better skilled individuals waiting for your position. That's the way I learned working [abroad] and, you are worth after what you produce... But that's why I'm in a hiring position now, and not as a simple worker, lots of hard work behind me"²⁷

The project of the battery Gigafactory in Arendal was described by one participant as in the establishment phase. The local municipality has prepared the terrain for the building process and the access to water (Arendal Kommune, 2021). The roads in the area are prepared to tolerate heavy traffic. The total area for this project is 940.000 m² at Eyde energy park and the plot is ready for the construction. The expected jobs provided from this project are 2500 positions by 2023:

“This is a very exciting project. Batteries are the new oil for Norway, and we better jump into it, gain experience, and study this technology now before is too late and others take the opportunity from us”.²⁸

The interviewee expresses a sense of urgency, suggesting this is a one-time opportunity. The plan from this expression indicates a sense of being first and fast before others. The goal is oriented towards not missing the opportunity to make a profitable business.

“I come from a culture of competition, here in Norway the ‘work-spirit’ seems oriented towards a rather different goal of equity and cooperation, we’ll see how it works. For now, it is important for us to establish a team with the right skills, and that is going to require professionals from abroad. I would dare to say that the locals have a chance, at

²⁷ IO 51 group investors, excel sheet nr. 51.

²⁸ IO 8 group of workers, excel sheet nr 4.

least in the beginning, as operators. People needs to gain technical skills to compete for better positions”.²⁹

The interviewee talked extensively about former experiences working abroad, then comparing those experiences with Norway. The projected impressions pointed towards a sense of pride and superiority. ‘I learned to be the best to get the best’. When reflecting on the observations of Norway so far, the interviewee expressed that *they*, i.e., Norwegians, need to build skills. Although not directly mentioned, the indirect message highlighted a superiority sense compared to the locals. A sort of us-vs-them understanding.

This statement can also be analyzed and included within the theme competition, but it also fits within the theme ‘plan’ – the plan entails the need for skills in order to have the opportunity to move into ‘better positions’. During this interview, the participant did not mention climate change or climate goals but emphasized that Norway’s hydropower makes this industry greener than other gigafactories. Furthermore, the use of ‘oil’ as comparison gives the idea of the economic goals of this project, establishing a replacement to Norway’s most profitable industry.

After talking to this participant, the plan pointed towards establishing a profitable industry with the most capable workers, as well as offering the position of operators to the locals who do not yet have relevant formation. Although not directly expressed, the operator position is presented by this participant as a task for blue-collar workers.

The real opportunities, according to this participant, are for those with experience and skills within technical areas and engineering. This also indicates a higher inequality determined by skill level between white-collar and blue-collar workers. The Norwegian green-collar workers, as indicated by this participant are ready to take an operator job, then gain skills and compete for better positions.

²⁹ IO 9 group of workers, excel sheet 4b-c

5.1.5 Indicators of “Plan”

Plan and its subthemes point towards the different strategies the participants have to tackle changes. The data indicated that many participants from the group politicians and trade unions understand that the Norwegian authorities have a holistic plan related to the Norwegian model. This entails a perception of a social-economic model designed to tackle issues regarding the interests of workers as well as potential challenges that could affect Norwegian society in general.

However, defining the model represented a challenge for the same participants that believe in this system. Furthermore, the level of trust in the effectiveness of that plan in praxis, varies dramatically amongst the group of workers, regardless of hierarchy. White collar workers as well as blue collar workers have expressed a growing concern regarding the capacity of the Norwegian administration to stand for the interests of workers.

White-collar workers from the data stated that unions represent better blue-collar cases. Blue-collar workers expressed discontent with the unions, but still stayed unionized because “is better than nothing”.

For investors, the idea of a ‘plan’ appears to be the establishment of new so-called green industries in Norway. From my data, this is primarily a matter of production of wealth, not primarily a matter of countering climate change or meeting climate goals.

5.2 Analysis of the theme “Cooperation”

The theme Cooperation represents participant’s statements that seek understanding and consideration from other actors for goal achievement. This theme was formed by participants’ implicit and explicit expressions that pointed towards ideas of collaboration. The different intentions resulted in different understandings of what cooperation entails; cooperation therefore impacted workers’ interests in different ways, as shown in the resulting subthemes:

- **Support:** this refers to times when participants (and documents) referred to financial support for the private sector, in the form of adaptation of policies that affect workers’ stability (re-adjustments in temporary contracts), and the deregulation of the work

market as a way of pushing for “profitable jobs”. At times, support entails a more comprehensive notion of what workers expect regarding the protection of worker’s rights and a clearer path to a fair green transition. This subtheme analyses who is the recipient of support, and what it means for industry workers in terms of opportunities and challenges.

- **Acceptance:** this relates to authorities’ and participants’ statements asking others to adapt and accept changes. This subtheme is also concerned with which group is expected to passively adapt, and which group is not willing to change or lose benefits.
- **Partnership:** this highlights arguments from the data entailing a sense of cooperation between certain sectors. The subtheme shows potential outcomes for industry workers by observing who is included as a partner for growth and who is excluded, aiming to identify what type of implications these alliances create for industry workers.
- **Flexibility:** this refers to participants’ willingness to sacrifice positions or professions, ideas of identity attached to professions, lower wages, and status to achieve employability. This subtheme is also concerned with losing values, or ideas connected to equality within the Norwegian society because of protecting industry in ‘challenged’ times.

5.2.1 The group of politicians and the theme cooperation

The following participant had a particular interest in the establishment of the battery cell gigafactory. This industry represents for this participant economic reactivation for the area of Agder. Furthermore, the participant spoke about a need for cooperation related to acceptance, referring to a process that may not be simple at the beginning:

“A shift towards greener industries is a reality that **we all must adjust to**. Initiatives from different investors are crucial to keep our social structures working; to keep our welfare system alive and sustainable. But at some point, it is important for our land to understand that new green industries **need time to generate equal or similar profit** as the one we got used to from oil and gas, we all must be willing to adjust. As I see it, social adaptation is important to succeed and overcome future challenges... I believe so

and changing our lifestyles to lower our carbon footprint is a start. Electric alternatives for example, represent a good alternative for Norway, while we keep our climate goals up to date to the global agenda. That is solidarity, growth, and environmental responsibility all in one”.³⁰

For the political actor represented above, the *Green Shift* is a process that requires that society adapt to it. The participant suggests that consumers have a role to play in cooperation with the electric industries as a way of making the *Green Shift* a reality.

For other political actors, there is a general acceptance of growing energy consumption, and more expensive electricity as the expected outcome. Acceptance is related to cooperation as consumers are expected to accept growing prices in the domestic energy market:

“**We know** that the energy consumption is just going to be higher for every year that goes”.³¹

“The different green initiatives in Norway related to electricity need and demand a higher production of electricity. Prices are going to be higher, but this is a give and take, it is part of the transition”.³²

Such statements from politicians encompass acceptance and normalization of the growing trend of energy consumption, and they follow the logic of investing and widening so-called green energy production. The mentioned value in the White Paper nr 36 is presented as one of the goals for a successful plan to tackle climate goals and create work for the Norwegian population, through cooperation. In a sense, capitalism (value, growth, economic growth) is presented as part of the solution of an unavoidable crisis.

³⁰ IO 32, group politicians. Excel sheet 15

³¹ IO 33, group politicians. Excel sheet nr 33

³² IO 35, group politicians. Excel sheet nr 33c

5.2.2 The group of workers and the theme cooperation

A participant involved in the oil and gas sector expresses cooperation as acceptance and support of their employers, one of the oil and gas companies in Norway that received generous financial support from the state to stand the challenges of the pandemic. However, this employee understands that means sharing challenges as equals, where the sense of fellowship in critical times created for workers a will to adapt, and even acceptance of losing their previous benefits:

“And also, these quarantines, we are struggling, sometimes the hotel and the food are not that good, but **we must support our companies on these difficult times**. Uh, **I can also imagine the company like they must be struggling** as well, because, yeah, **they have to pay** these days that we are on quarantines and that costs like for them as well. Yeah.”³³

Furthermore, during the interview, the same participant expresses a sense of empathetic concern towards petroleum industries, due to what the participant understands as arguable green initiatives that are causing uncertainty for the future of oil and gas. The participant understands external forces, the international community, as being responsible for administrating pressure for a change towards renewable energies. However, the participant does not believe in the effectiveness of the green investments coming to Norway, and in fact mentions that if the situation is so severe then the whole country would take a drastic approach towards sustainability by cutting oil and gas. The participant expresses concern for the company and for their own future:

“**Apparently** the interesting new businesses comes **as green, if they are green**, that is another question, or maybe not relevant, or maybe it even belongs to a different level of

³³ IO nr 14, group of workers, Excel sheet nr.10 in portuguese (E também, essas quarentenas, a gente está lutando, às vezes o hotel não é tão bom assim, mais nos temos que apoiar a empresa nestes tempos difíceis. Uh, eu posso imaginar também a empresa como eles devem estar lutando também, porque, sim, eles têm que pagar esses dias que estamos em quarentena. E também gosto para eles também. Sim. Então)

question, you know? Petroleum is **challenged by this change of heart in the market**. But here in Norway it is clearer that maybe all that (the green initiatives) is just crap, otherwise we should have stopped for real long ago, if we are really in danger. I think there is a climate crisis, **but I don't think is going to be solved by the so-called green industries that are coming to Norway**. This is a bunch of business, and **let's call them for what they are: businesses for EU, the green part bothers me**, totally, yeah.”³⁴

This quote can be read as showing that this participant has internalized the green initiatives as the enemy. The view of this participant expressed in the next quote shows an internalized skepticism towards green investments because of the ambiguity the Norwegian authorities irradiate in their actions, policies, and strategies towards the climate crisis and the environment:

“I'm not naïve, you know? Because it just looks like they are negotiating business, the green stuff coming to Norway is as bad as oil and gas. We at the company got some paper to read that explained like their business is run by workforce, by the guys that be working. So, the company must do an agreement with them so they can give the workers kind of. Yeah. It's always like that.”

5.2.3 The group of trade unions and the theme cooperation

Cooperation within the group of trade unions resulted from participants' understandings of their role as union representatives as mediators of good communication between employers' and employees' needs. The logic of trade unions is traditionally connected to ideas of labor protection and a means of power to balance asymmetries intrinsic in the relation of employer-employee. Although Marx's classic definition of an organized labor force makes proletarians

³⁴ IO nr. 14, group of workers, Excel sheet nr 10 and 11, in Portuguese: (*¿Aparentemente, os novos negócios interessantes vêm como verdes, se são verdes, isso está fora de questão, ou tal vez não seja relevante, ou tal vez até pertença a um nível diferente de pergunta, sabe? O petróleo é desafiado por essa mudança de atitude no mercado. Mas aqui na Noruega está mais claro que talvez tudo isso (as iniciativas verdes) seja apenas uma porcaria, caso contrário deveríamos ter parado de verdade há muito tempo, se estamos realmente em perigo. Acho que há uma crise climática, mas não acho que será resolvido pelas chamadas indústrias verdes que estão chegando à Noruega. Isso é um monte de negócios, e vamos chamá-los pelo que são: negócios pela Europa, a parte verde me incomoda demais, totalmente, sim*)

stronger, in the Norwegian consensus-oriented approach the tendency is toward flexibility and compromise instead of showing some teeth (strike). However, this aspect of cooperation doesn't mean the absence of power.

Analyzed through the lens of discourse, the following statements appear soft, as participants rely on trust as an element of the Norwegian way of bargaining. Trade union representatives even show empathy to investor's needs, because "they need to be strong in order to provide strong jobs". Support as a subtheme, as well as flexibility amongst trade unions indicate challenges concerning how best to represent workers. The discourse follows connotations of a special national thing that others don't have, a society based on trust:

"We try always to keep it civil. Our society is different than England for example, if you see the word "trust" in Norwegian means the same from both ways "tillit". In Norway we don't just go outside and burn the parliament. Our work is to achieve solutions that are logical and good for both parts".³⁵

Furthermore:

"We have to cooperate with employers, without them there are no jobs, and no jobs then no members..."

The next section presents a rather drastically different outcome of this support and acceptance

5.2.4 The group of investors and the theme cooperation

The theme cooperation follows a certain rhetoric that oscillates between investors being victims of a strongly regulated labor market, and investors and employers projecting themselves as cooperators on behalf of the entire Norwegian economy because of the working possibilities they offer by their investments. The employer is forced to take a significant responsibility for each employee.

³⁵ IO11 trade unions. Excel sheet nr13d.

From the perspective of investors, a more flexible contract law preceded choosing Norway as a country to invest in. Without a certain amount of deregulation and the relaxation of contract law, investment would not have happened. In a sense, this deregulation can be seen as a cooperation between investors and lawgivers, allowing for new investment in Norway.

“We need flexibility and the autonomy to hire people just for a short period of time, many employees need also to keep other possibilities open. Until recently we needed to “marry for life” whenever hiring someone, and sometimes things do not go as expected economically, but also from what the new employee delivers dare taking the risks in such a strongly regulated country”.³⁶

5.2.5 Indicators of “Cooperation”

Cooperation and its subthemes indicate a movement toward supporting investors because politicians see this group as increasingly important for maintaining a strong and diverse economy, trade unions see the need to maintain civil negotiations based on trust, and workers see the need to accept that these are challenging times, and thus workers may experience “together” with investors the oscillations of the market. As for investors, all of these elements, all of these aspects of cooperation, result in more profitable businesses.

5.3 Analysis of the theme “Competition”

Competition: this theme consists of comments that express antagonist approaches between actors. Many of the participants communicated a direct sense of rivalry as they contend for positions within the green industries. For politicians, competition highlighted rivalry between local municipalities competing for contracts for the establishment of initiatives related to the *Green Shift*. Competition represents different outcomes and realities, changing from severe to positive depending on the group being represented. The subthemes emerging to illustrate this claim are explained as follows:

³⁶ IO 3 Nr. group of investors, excel sheet nr. 3

- **Struggle:** this subtheme embraces senses of difficulties expressed by participants in relation to a highly competitive labor-market or environment. Many participants associated struggle with insecurities related to having or not having the right skills for the green industries, or for remaining in their current position (as was the case of some of the oil and gas workers re-hired under temporary contracts). Many participants, when reflecting on the possibilities of changing to green industries, indicated senses of fear and anxiety: “**they** say that this is not an easy market, if one aspires to **interesting** positions at least”.
- **Benefits:** this subtheme indicates that for some of the studied groups the establishment of a competitive environment results in positive outcomes. Workers competing for the same position, municipalities competing for green industries, and investors competing for establishing the best technologies, would in each case potentially bring the best offer to the local market.
- **Inequality:** this subtheme refers to an environment of competition (for example between workers of various industrial sectors for being the best), which creates winners and losers amongst the different participant groups. Where the advantages of competition are brought out by the previous subtheme (benefits), inequality threatens to negate those advantages.
- **Individualism:** this subtheme refers to the sense of achievement often related to individual goals, personal growth, and personal skills. The quotes representing this subtheme express participants moving away from ideas of community and cooperation, toward individual accomplishments or simply individual job security. This subtheme thus stands somewhat in contrast to the theme cooperation.

Competition appeared in relation to a sense of racing between regions in Norway. Different communities were competing for the establishment of green industries. Sometimes it also referred to countries battling to establish the most effective production of green products. The green initiative that was often mentioned amongst my participants is related to battery gigafactories.

Participants connected to the oil and gas industry explained how competition is at times a struggle, especially amongst temporary contract workers. Individualism appears increasingly amongst workers, related to making themselves employable. Concerns for employability often require thinking individually, away from welfare of the group, and building skills to achieve better positions.

For the group of investors, competition was often associated with positive outcomes, getting the best out of workers and better offers from the competing municipalities and counties.

5.3.1 The group of politicians and the theme competition

In the following quote, we see how a politician views the struggle to attract green industry, for example a battery factory, as a competition between different regions in Norway. The *Green Shift* is in this regard not a common goal for the whole country, due to the climate crisis, but is a local matter: a matter of attracting new industries to the local area, in competition with other areas.

“After looking at the projects coming to our area, with the battery factory for example, and then looking at similar projects in other areas, I see that we have better prospects to succeed than other communities, the other have changed their goals along the way”.

“For example investments in Mo i Rana related to batteries, then changing to wind power, then investing in shares in New York, or something like that, the point is that those investments are surrounded by some complications regarding who owns what, and who has responsibility for what, then there are some initiatives in Sweden, they say that in a ten years perspective, they are going to have a battery factory with capacity for 3000 employees, that eventually will evolve to 10.000, at least, workplaces for the locals, because batteries need side industries, so all these changes have a very positive impact for our economy, especially for a small community like ours.”³⁷

³⁷ IO Nr. 30, group politicians, excel sheet 13

5.3.2 The group of workers and the theme competition

While politicians seem to compete collectively with other communities, individual workers are competing on their own. This can also entail avoiding organization in a labor union for a worker hoping to achieve a leadership position one day. Better to avoid association with unions if it can help me as an individual.

“At the end of the day is up to you and your abilities if you find a good job within industry or in any field.”³⁸

“I see that trade unions play an important role for some workers, or at least it did in the past apparently, but I’m not organized, and I never was, my position and career aspirations inside this company are not compatible with the ‘labor force against the system’ story. I belong to the ones that is in a leader position, so it will not add to my curriculum to be amongst the ones protesting and making trouble”

Interviewer: Could you elaborate a bit more on how are the organized workers making trouble?

“Well, I don’t know if that is the right thing to say, but clearly, workers associated to unions represent potential trouble for the directives. Unionized workers are seen as always wanting more benefits, putting less effort, it’s understandable in a way, but if my goal is to achieve a chief position, I better stay away from that light”.

The statement above describes the participant’s understanding of trade unions as stigmatized within workers aspiring to leader positions. This indicates the existence of negative connotations amongst leaders of organized labor force, transpiring in expressions such as lazy, greedy, troublemaker.

³⁸ IO nr 25, group of workers, excel sheet 20c-25a

“The company on the other side, depends on the capacity to make profit, and effective production is key to subsist in this highly competitive universe of extractions. So, to be on a leader position one must separate, or take some distance from that figure of the worker claiming for better and more, right?”

This participant indicates that they see themselves as superior to blue-collar workers. This participant thus takes the role described by Marx as petite bourgeoisie, an aspirant to positions that defend the company’s interests, because they see themselves as one of the higher ranked actors.

“My take is to get more salary by proving that my job is effective, because, for example, and to put it in perspective, since the 90’s onwards oil industries in Norway began to understand that one could make equal production with less employees. The cuttings began then, most platforms would focus on more profitable ways. Employees that are willing to level up, specialize, such as engineers for instance, are less likely to be affected by these cuttings”.³⁹

The indicator in the above expressed statement points toward a move closer to individualism and meritocracy⁴⁰ than to senses of cooperation and solidarity with other workers.

“I had an interview for a position as a chief for a flexy-crew, I did not get that position, but that could have been a big step towards a safe job. You get finally a permanent contract as chief... Next time maybe”⁴¹

This participant explained the concept of a flexy-crew:

³⁹ IO nr 26, group of workers, excel sheet 26.

⁴⁰ Achievement of goals based in individual talent, effort. Power under a meritocratic approach is part of one’s capacity, away from senses of community and solidarity (Daniels, 1978)

⁴¹ IO 22, group of workers, excel sheet 22.

“Those are the workers that come to work for specific assignments. The company calls them depending on the amount of work, temporary workers, yeah. Before the 2014 oil crisis, many of those workers had permanent contracts, but lost their jobs and were re-hired as this new concept. But the chief executives are permanent employees, that’s the deal, you know.”

Even though the analysis is competition, this statement contains elements of acceptance and crisis, because the worsened conditions described by the participant are now understood as the new reality because of a sense of crisis. Furthermore, the participant explains that permanent positions to those highly qualified is what this company implemented as the new rule for the workers that had lost their jobs, and who are now re-hired but with great uncertainty regarding their future prospectives.

Another interviewee from the oil and gas sector expresses the following regarding perceptions of changing to green industries:

“You know? My wife works for renewable energy back home. I would go and start to work with them if I could, the thing is that there is not great stability in that sector now. And if it was a long term, it would be the best scenario for me. Like having the same kind of job that I have nowadays, but in a green energy and full employee, that’s the perfect scenario. But for that you need to have the right preparation, otherwise they keep you to clean the floors”.⁴²

This competitive labor market certainly does not make it easy to move from oil and gas into green industry.

⁴² IO 24, group of workers, Excel sheet 24. Você sabe? Minha esposa trabalha para energia renovável em meu país. Eu iria e começaria a trabalhar com eles se pudesse, o fato é que não há grande estabilidade nesse setor agora. E se fosse se fosse a longo prazo, seria o melhor cenário para mim. Como ter o mesmo tipo de trabalho que tenho hoje, mas em uma energia verde e funcionário completo, esse é o cenário perfeito. Mas para isso você precisa ter a preparação certa, senão eles te mantêm para limpar o chão”

5.3.3 The group of trade unions and the theme competition

For trade union representatives, the theme competition refers to understanding and adaptation to what is good for their members in economic terms.

“Workers for renewable houses, I don’t know, putting a solar panel in someone’s house, that people contribute to the sustainable future of Norway, if we want workers in better green positions, the workers need to start specializations, to level up with the capacity of those from Asia”.⁴³

Currently within trade unions the understandings of a green worker show some elements of otherness and exigency. We need them, but they must level-up. Furthermore, when referring to the oil and gas sector the tone changed radically, stating that the oil and gas industry plays a key role in support of the *Green Shift*.

“Workers in the oil and gas sector are important for Norway, it is not realistic to say that Norway is going to shut down their production, there is too much that depends on oil today. Besides, as we all know, our system of welfare could not be sustained with those green initiatives, that is where we stand on regards to oil and gas workers as for today.”⁴⁴

“Green industries are the answer for the market of the future, and we need more of those. The beginning is hard for us in Norway, because we don’t have the expertise required in the green industries, the ones that have the expertise are most likely coming from abroad.”⁴⁵

If we make a categorical statement, green industries now and probably for the next years, will offer jobs for people with a not particularly mega background. But those people need jobs too, you know? We are the faithful guard dogs that will stand with the workers

⁴³ IO nr 29, group trade unions, excel sheet nr 22c

⁴⁴IO nr 20, group trade unions, excel sheet nr 21

⁴⁵ IO nr 19, group trade unions, excel sheet nr 19

and represent the interests of our members, but for that to happen, we need industries that come here to stay, and we need competent local workers⁴⁶

“Asia has an advantage in all the technologies related to electricity. Norway has hydropower as the greenest alternative to make any production green. That is something that calls investors to our country. But then our labor force needs to catch up with the skills of people that is working on these industries since the 90’s. That is going to be a hard task to tackle, but not impossible... But we need to be at the level, meet the expectations of the market. The rest is here already⁴⁷.”

For trade unions, competition highlights issues between sectors. Certain trade unions (Tekna, for instance) seem to support members moving away from hegemonic goals, instead encouraging workers to invest time to build skills to achieve better positions as employees, as the next quote expresses:

“We at Tekna represent many professionals with high skills. We are often the choice of workers in leadership positions because we provide many opportunities for personal growth. Of course we also defend the interests of our members”.⁴⁸

Competition for some trade unions pushes workers towards individualism. Many trade union participants expressed that competition make companies more productive, and if companies are productive then workers have a safe income.

However, competition for members between the different trade unions in Norway is also indicated within my data. This indicates a sense of unions as enterprises competing for clients. This is a trend that points toward a movement away from solidarity and shared values, undermining Marx’s understanding of unions as a power balancing tool for workers.

⁴⁶ IO nr 16, group trade unions, excel sheet nr 16

⁴⁷ IO 48, group investors, excel sheet nr 41b

⁴⁸ IO 28, group trade unions, excel sheet nr 19b

5.3.4 The group of investors and the theme competition

As for investors, it almost goes without saying that competition is crucial. This entails competition in hiring and competition to find the best locations for new development. The following quotes indicate this clearly.

“We need to have a certain flexibility for our contracts, that is very important for industries that are in the take-off phase. For example, it is crucial for investors to have the capacity of hiring people but not for life, that also is a benefit for the employees, it creates a freer dynamic between employer and employee” ... “The current government (the participant refers here to the former administration of Erna Solberg), has made important changes for us in the law, there are a lot of people, young people, that need some extra income, while they are studying for example, or mothers that want to have time to be with their families instead of taking the burden of a 100 % position.”⁴⁹

It's going to be like in any other business at the start; when we are in the start phase we need to take care and invest smart in people that have more experience, the most capacitated; and that leaves us with people from all over the world: most from Asia, but surprisingly enough from Colombia... The thing is that we have to pick them from abroad, I think is way more easy to get people to come to Norway than to other less attractive places. Therefore, we need to make it attractive for these employees and that also brings development to the area of course, but we required some comprehension and patience from the locals to level up to get interesting positions at our company, I would encourage industry workers to start getting the capacitation for green projects right now (laughs).”⁵⁰

⁴⁹IO 45, group investors, excel sheet nr 49 a-b

⁵⁰ IO 44, from the group of investors, excel sheet Nr. 41

Investors indicate in the data that competition provides them with positive outcomes. For example, workers competing for a position provides highly skilled workers. Politicians competing to attract investors provides investors with a broader variety of options to choose from. White Paper nr 36 states that the government will support profitable investments as a source of jobs. This creates a shared understanding that investors are the one's to be supported. This could of course create a situation where investors are competing between each other for government support, but my data doesn't indicate this clearly. It seems more like any investor who chooses to invest in Norway and create jobs, will be supported.

5.3.5 Indicators of "Competition"

Competition and its subthemes explored the different understandings and outcomes of a growing sense of domestic competition. For politicians, this means that regions compete at being the hosts of the best, the newest, the greenest new green industry, and that Norway as a whole competes against other countries. For workers, on the other hand, competition means competing with each other for the best jobs, the best salary, the best contracts. For trade unions, competition means competing with each other for the most members; and for investors and employers, competition means competing for the best locations, the best workers, and the best legal frameworks. The primary goal of this competition is a positive economic outcome for all who are involved, but the data at the same time indicated lower senses of solidarity between the various parties.

5.4 Analysis of the theme "Crisis"

The theme crisis entails several contrasting understandings for each group. Some participants expect positive outcomes from the sense of crisis, while others expect or fear negative outcomes. The analysis results in four main subthemes:

- **Opportunity:** this subtheme accounts for every statement that referred to the climate crisis as a door to new industries and opportunities.
- **Loss:** this subtheme is connected to professional identity. Also, for other sectors in the data, the subtheme relates to senses of losing the Norwegian status as the little land that managed a big and profitable petroleum industry.

- **Growth:** this subtheme is related to the sense of crisis within the data in relation to economic growth. For example, for investors within the green sector, the climate crisis represents diversification of the economy. For the oil and gas industry, the argument of financially supporting a low-carbon future meant supporting the accumulation of profits in investments such as the SWF.
- **Threat:** this final subtheme represents the fear related to what changes will entail for certain actors, for example workers who have dedicated many years to one industrial sector. For some participants, the subtheme is related to the fear of missing the known oil and gas sector. This subtheme also represents senses of limited entrepreneurial liberty for investors, due to Norway's highly regulated market.

Crisis understood as threat is expressed most amongst many oil and gas workers, a threat for their identity as petroleum workers, a threat for their source of income, and a threat for their stability. They are unconvinced that the green sector has space for their skills, and so the green sector is a threat as well. However, some white-collar workers (3 participants) referred to green industries as opportunity and potential. Still, many participants expressed skepticism towards the positive outcomes for industry workers emerging from the green shift.

Threat as a subtheme is also relevant for the group politicians, regarding a growing concern and need to finding alternative industries to replace revenues from the oil and gas industry, often combined with support for specific industrial initiatives, for example battery factories. The same participants also referred to the green shift as a threat to the hydrocarbons sector, meaning a threat to the Norwegian economy. This is followed by arguments to keep up oil and gas extraction while the replacement gains a clearer shape.

The word crisis is often used to describe a state that represents a dangerous situation. A profound change with important consequences of certain situation or process. Originally the term crisis meant a sudden change, a turning point of events that could be for the better or worse (Soanes & Hawker, 2006). This description of the word crisis as a turn for the better or the worse, matched the different levels and understandings of the concept crisis reflected by the different groups of participants. There were implicit and explicit references attached to the term

from each group of contributors that referred to the term according to their perceived reality creating discrepancies, nuances, contradictions, and agreements.

The several understandings of crisis have different implications and outcomes for the different groups of participants. They are shaping the future of industry workers in Norway, depending on and according to the hierarchical position of the participants and their influence in the shaping of society by discursive constructions. They might lead to changes in policies and regulations, but also form a common understanding of a wider social phenomenon, in this case the *Green Shift*.

The coming section further presents participant's understandings of crisis separated by groups, finally the last section opens for discussion and analyses the outcomes and subthemes. The section crisis is in conversation with Klein's "shock doctrine", reflecting on resilience of capitalist modes of production to external and self-created crisis, even in war situations. This approach adds to Marx's primary social analysis of class formation a more updated reflection of capitalist-resilience in modern societies. Shock capitalism looks at the connections between extreme crisis rhetoric as excuses to push for new forms of capital accumulation.

In critical theory of class formations, capital places workers in positions of precarity, while the expansion of capitalism pursues value as first outcome. Framing class formation as theory for this section reflects on the observations of dynamics between the different groups. Further, discourse frames and recognizes communicative power at work within the different groups, and reflects on its role in forming the green-collar worker within ambiguous concepts of climate crisis, out of the participants' conflicted understandings of crisis.

5.4.1 The group of politicians and the theme crisis

The word crisis seems to be avoided in official documents relating to the climate crisis. Relevant analyzed documents regarding topics of labour, energy and climate refer instead to rather harmless changes or even opportunities. The government white paper 'Energy for Work' for example refers to it in the following way:

“We are facing major changes in the global energy market, partly as the result of new technologies, attached to tightened climate policies and ever-increasing demand for energy” (Regjering, 2021).⁵¹

This statement from White Paper nr 36 “Energy for Work” informs of major changes and an ever-increasing demand for energy due to climate policies. The statement represents an example of the communicative mode throughout the rest of the document. The hint of the climate crisis as a fact is there, but implicitly.

“Energy for work has been chosen as the title of this White Paper based on the long-term value creation from Norwegian energy resources. The Government’s policy will lay the foundation for energy resources to continue to be used to create value, work, and welfare in Norway. Energy policy builds on the government’s overall goal of creating more profitable jobs in the private sector and thus, cutting emissions, not development” (Regjering, 2021).

“Cutting emissions, not development” Here the document refers ambiguously to a commitment to achieve the 2030 climate goals “cutting emissions” but showing that the crisis for the government lays on finding an alternative that allows *Norway* to keep generating value “not *cutting* development”.

The spotlight is shined on the overall goals of the government: 1. Create value, which entails creating revenues, sources of profitable income, taxes, and exports. 2. Create work, explained as “profitable jobs”, while avoiding explaining profitable for whom. In the light of class division, labor is observed and valued by its results. In other words, in a capitalist system, instruments and subjects of labor are means of production, means for achieving the goal of profit, i.e. value (Marx, 2013,pp. 354-55) 3. Keep the welfare system, appealing to potential social impacts of cutting development.

⁵¹ Document analysis, excel sheet nr. 1

The Norwegian welfare system represent principles of social democracy. The values of collective care often appear together with industrial development. Connected especially to the oil and gas industry, they emerge as a form of ultimate argument to justify maintaining the hydrocarbon industries in times when an imminent climate and environmental catastrophe is of global concern (Dunlap, 2021; Hornborg, 2014; Pörtner et al., 2022; Ryggvik, 2009). Furthermore, the welfare system in Norway seems to represent a hole in the mechanics of class formations of proletarians, and welfare certainly represents a robust structural system of social care for Norway in terms of health, education, maternity leave, and (to certain degree) unemployment. The state appears to have created a way to prevent inequality, while at the same time balancing opportunities for social mobility and avoiding the total dependence of the labor classes on the owners of the means of production. Yet, two points seem important to remark:

- 1) The Norwegian welfare existed before the oil and gas industry (Øvald et al., 2019, pp. 244-46)
- 2) It resulted, as explained by Falkum (2020, pp. 107-108), out of social contestations, and was finally established to coordinate society and economic growth hand in hand.

The state's concern for the welfare system and the state's support of corporate value creation (capitalism) are two sides of the same coin, oriented both towards protecting growth and development and towards giving back to society a basic coverage. This is a rather poor argument, however, if we take global environmental degradation into this equation of pros and cons and the notion of social stigma related to unemployed individuals in need of using the welfare system.

There are also vague references to climate crisis implicit in this document, but they are not at the forefront. Norway has a goal to protect the economic robustness that characterizes Norway as a petroleum nation. The *why* of this ambiguity disguises Norway's dependency on the high profits from the oil and gas industry. Cutting emissions with a clear concern for environmental degradation caused by fossil fuels would entail cutting oil and gas. The *how* refers to capitalist modes of production preserving value-creation coming from the private sector. The order of the list of goals does not hide this notion, arguing that the logic of profitable job creation depends on the support of the private sector. A rational understanding points toward the support of

private investments as essential to jobs and to keeping the necessary economic flow for the Norwegian economic status quo, also mentioning welfare as a final element in the list of goals, as an example of social awareness and care.

According to White Paper nr 36, capital (value-creation), is coming to the rescue of the social-economic system of Norway by prioritizing the private sector.

“The government wants our renewable energy resources to be used and refined in Norway. Both power production and the use of power in business create great values that provide a basis for many jobs. In several places in the country, power-intensive industry is the cornerstone of companies that are important for other businesses and the local community. Since its inception in the late 1960s, the oil and gas business has become of great importance to the mainland economy in Norway. The level of activity is expected to gradually decrease towards 2040” (Regjering, 2021).⁵²

Furthermore, policies oriented to a reduction of CO₂ gasses as a response to the climate crisis are presented by this document as “tightened policies”, instead of using a more direct statement such as “action to tackle climate crisis”. It is taken for granted that the reader is informed about the climate goals for Norway towards a low carbon society. Furthermore, the document suggests as critical and unavoidable the “demand for energy”, assumed as a critical fact for the coming years. Therefore, the theme “crisis” understood from official documents is not related to climate in a direct manner.

The issue regarding authorities’ lack of forthrightness in language used in official documents when referring to the climate crisis has created tensions and different opinions among parliamentary representants from different political parties. In 2019, a legal case was presented by politicians from the Socialist Party of the left (Sosialistisk Venstreparti (SV)), calling for the government to declare the climate crisis as a national critical situation. The argument was that creating a common ground for the severity of the climate crisis would help all actors as a starting

⁵² Document analysis, excel sheet nr. 1

point for concrete action (Stortinget, 2019). However, the motion was not approved as such; instead, after deliberation, parliament representatives voted against that motion, arguing that handling the environmental crisis in the same line as a direct threat (fire, earthquake, volcanic activity) would not have a positive effect in society (Stortinget, 2019). Instead, governmental organs and authorities refer to “climate control/planning” (Klimatiltak) in Norway.

“Crisis” has as a subtheme “threat”, but this is played down by the vague way in climate change is spoken of on official or political levels. This issue is exposed in the chosen language for laws, rapports, and related documents of public access. From the perspective of discursive analysis, this has the power to suggest an overlapping sense of opportunities, acceptance, challenges, and politicians’ capacity to create solutions out of a global catastrophe caused mainly by fossil fuels, which is Norway’s main industry. The crisis and threat is downplayed.

To the reader, the tone changes from critical climate crisis into a prosperous opportunity, coming from a state organism that seems to care about achieving the climate goals, while taking care of the population’s income source and economy, by presenting new industries as job sources.

The mention of climate as a main concern is in the document but is not presented in a straightforward language. It is rather suggested within the context with a sense of taken-for-granted-ness when referring to the replacement of oil and gas by so-called sustainable energy sources: “The level of activity (of hydrocarbons) is expected to decrease by 2040.”

However, this understanding differs from the comments from an interviewee who expresses that the department of petroleum and energy has not initiated activities for a potential phasing out of the oil and gas industry. This confirms a certain ambiguity regarding addressing the climate crisis by cutting emissions but not cutting oil and gas extractions:

“To answer that question, I will start by stating a basic concept: the Ministry of Energy's responsibility is to implement the government's oil and gas policy. This policy is to ensure profitable extraction of oil and gas in a long-term perspective. This is widely rooted in the Storting (the parliament). Consequently, the Ministry of Petroleum and

Energy's oil and gas department has not initiated any special activities for a potential phasing out of oil and gas”.⁵³

In the case of the White Paper nr 36, officials avoid acknowledging the climate crisis directly, although they talk about the national plan for reducing greenhouse gases and the achievement of the 2030 climate goals. These are categorized as “the ambitious climate goals for Norway”, as expressed in the four goals presented in the energy action plan expressed in the White Paper nr 36 (my translation):

- 1) To create value that establishes the base to job creations in Norway.
- 2) To move towards electrification that will make Norway greener and better.
- 3) To establish new and profitable businesses.
- 4) To further develop a future-oriented oil and gas industry within the frame of the climate goals oriented to the reduction of carbon emissions (Regjering, 2021).

Information regarding exactly how Norway plans to achieve the 2030 climate goals remains, however, unclear throughout the document. Is it something that will happen because of a global out-phasing of oil and gas? A sort of collateral effect? Norway expects to green their economy and maintain their hydrocarbon industries.

“We are facing an unavoidable crisis; and climate just represents one side of the whole. Norway has a lot to catch up with the rest of Europe and we cannot afford to stay with the glory of the past. In these trying times we need to learn and allow technology to grow in the country”.

“...A change at the scale that is demanded globally means sooner or later adjustments in the way we produce, consume, and work. The problem is that nobody wants to pay

⁵³ IO 19 politicians, excel sheet nr 19.

any price... We all need to adjust for a brighter future, I mean, to achieve sustainability, jobs, a robust economy, keep our welfare... And green industries in addition to the ones we have play a decisive role, that I can say for sure”⁵⁴

When viewed in light of discourse theory, the ambiguous language in White Papers and other official documents downplays takes the topic of climate change as a real and urgent crisis.

Norway claims to respond to the climate goals, but this is immediately connected to a concern for value production in immediate connection to job creation. One way to understand this is as justifying capitalist industrial efforts (green capitalism) that are to grow in parallel to the existing oil and gas industries that are preserved (Øverbye, 2017). Furthermore, the flexible conceptualization of what is green within industries (explained in the document as energy sources belonging to electricity in Norway as being green due to hydropower), allows a wide range of efforts to enter the Norwegian market.

Crisis is also associated with “opportunity”; thus, opportunity belongs to the series of subthemes that emerged from “crisis”. For example:

“Norway has all the conditions to become the battery of Europe; and Arendal is about to become the heart of the battery coast; we have the best coast, equipped with a robust system for distribution, import and export of materials. That is part of our history and cultural heritage, you know? I don’t know if you heard about it, we have an extreme amount of expertise, I mean industrial expertise in the area, that is key to get this opportunity running”⁵⁵

This participant from the group of politicians explains with real conviction how the area of Arendal is particularly well equipped by experience from the activities of the past, referring to the past of shipbuilding and timber trade from the mid-1800s.

⁵⁴ IO Nr. 31, group politicians. Excel sheet 14

⁵⁵ IO Nr. 8, group politicians. Excel sheet 2

The industrial past as an ironworks and mining small town comes back in the way this participant reflects on the capacity of evolution for today's industrial landscape.

We will return to investors later, but a brief comment can be brought in her. When reflecting the "expertise" of the area, the investor's vision is different from the politician's: experts must come from abroad, while locals "catch up" with the required education on battery technology:

"It's going to be like in any other business at start; when we are at the start phase we need to take care and invest smart in people that has more experience, the most capacitated; and that leaves us with people from all over the world: most from Asia, but surprisingly enough from Colombia... the thing is that we have to pick them from abroad, I think is way more easy to get people to come to Norway than to other less attractive places. Therefore, we need to make it attractive for these employees and that also brings development to the area of course, but we required some comprehension and patience from the locals to level up to get interesting positions at our company, I would encourage industry workers to start getting the capacitation for green projects yesterday (laughs)".⁵⁶

Below, a political participant expresses a list of positive outcomes for the area in question because of the climate crisis. The effectiveness of investments in technological fixes as a plan to achieve the Norwegian targets for climate are not questioned by this actor; what is transmitted as important is the job possibilities and local growth that *will* come because of these initiatives. The participant showed a general excitement for the economic aspects brought by new industries, during crisis.

"One can see that the current climate crisis brought light at the end of the tunnel for the locals. 3.000 jobs that weren't here, are now a palpable reality. And that is just the start, think of all the side industries that will emerge because of batteries. Additionally, adding

⁵⁶ IO 44, from the group of investors, excel sheet Nr. 41

3000 people in one place, means development for the whole area; real state, schools, improving in our health services, and every new business means more jobs.

We can come back to our glory days, to put it in a way, this is positive and an absolute win-win-win scenario, we all win thanks to climate change in a way... I know it sounds weird, but this is a blessing for an area that was until yesterday facing challenges with an old population, while our bright youth are forced to Oslo to find working opportunities. Now, not only we keep them here at home, but we also provide them with extremely exciting opportunities for economic growth and self-development in the area they know and belong⁵⁷

The light at the end of the tunnel reference at the beginning of the conversation is related to the 3000 jobs that will potentially be created by the battery factory. Nevertheless, the activation of economy and what the participant refers as “*development for the whole area*” support value creation, and the interests of capitalists, as the core motor of economic activation for the area. The establishment of green industries for this municipality represents an opportunity for growth in population (taxes), as in value generation (external capital from investments).

Looking at the data from a discursive perspective resulted in the following elements: climate crisis for this participant is seen as a positive outcome for the community, a blessing, a sudden act of serendipity brought to the locals by a global climate crisis.

Since this actor belongs to the political and administrative sector, the positiveness emanating from the participant’s statements shows an already formed perception positive to the promotion of businesses related to what this actor understands as green initiatives in the area, understood as part of sustainable growth.

The participant is not interested in questioning the effectiveness of this initiative in terms of climate impacts. Apparently, the economic development that will bring jobs (green capitalism)

⁵⁷ IO Nr. 30, group politicians. Excel sheet 13

is at the center of what the community needed: the climate crisis brings population growth for the area, employment, and opportunities for what this participant sees as Norwegian young citizens who were previously forced to migrate to larger cities.

5.4.2 The group of workers and the theme crisis

Crisis for workers can mean different things. For example, changes in the working environment act in 2015 resulted in a general strike in Norway. This is certainly a form of crisis. Strikes in a well-organized workforce are meant as the ultimate power tool of workers, according to Marx's analysis of proletarians' strength coming from their capacity to unionize (Marx et al., 2008). However, sudden changes in the working law were approved without the participation of the trade unions (Torgny, 2021). Currently, the changes in the working environment act from the previous regime are being studied from the new leading authorities, with the goal of creating better conditions for the workers and ensuring the inclusion of trade unions in the law-making process in the future (Torgny, 2021). We will return to these changes in the working environment act near the end of the section.

In my interviews, the labor market was presented as being affected by the green shift as a time of challenges, difficulties, and/or danger. This primary understanding of crisis is one of the recurrent themes that appeared amongst all the informants, but it especially affects the workers. At the start of the interviews, most participants shared their perspectives regarding crisis.

“The support one gets from some trade unions in Norway is plain bull shit, lots of nice chit chat referring to worker's rights, workshops about this and that, but when confronted with the moment of showing some balls (courage) one gets excuses and weak solutions, we are not kids for goodness sakes.⁵⁸

Anger was a recurrent feeling identified in the data, especially amongst workers, due to a sense of threat regarding individual job security. At the same time, many workers expressed anger

⁵⁸ IO nr.6 group of workers oil and gas, excel sheet nr 6. (Spanish to English)

oriented toward the practical continuation of the oil and gas industry, when the discourse is increasingly telling them that the sector is under a crisis.

“When I was a member of the Fellesforbundet,⁵⁹ I witnessed a lot of people getting laid off for no reason, just random downsizing to readjust costs at the oil platform, this was in 2014, it did not happen to me (to lose my job), but the working conditions suddenly changed, they asked me to pay for all my expenses when on mainland, since the company was experiencing economic challenges. You know what? The company never stopped, or downsized extractions or activities at the platform but we were expected to work more with the fear that you are laid off next.⁶⁰

Furthermore, the next worker expresses the following:

“I thought that my representatives at the trade union would find a solution, but they offered me a small rise of salary and excuses, I quit my membership and since I’m not organized, it’s a waste of money. The crisis is a constant, oil prices crisis, war crisis, climate crisis... You name it, at the end of the day if someone must pay the price, the workers lose, the big guys never lose”⁶¹

The statement above expresses a different perspective of the perception of crisis for this participant that belongs to the group of workers. The participant has worked for over 20 years in the oil and gas industry and explains reasons for not trusting trade unions. Participant’s experiences resulted in a general uncertainty towards the capacity of Norwegian trade unions to defend workers’ interests, as well as trusting the effectiveness of workers’ means of power: to strike.

⁵⁹ One of the biggest trade unions of Norway within the private sector, around 160.000 workers are associated with this union (Fellesforbundet, 2022).

⁶⁰ IO nr 5 group of workers, excel sheet nr 5a

⁶¹ IO nr 6 group of workers, excel sheet nr 6 (Spanish to English)

The results of the 2016 strike were not enough to restore this interviewee's trust. Wages were negotiated, but workers also demand job security stipulated in contracts guaranteeing workers' safety against another period of massive layoffs. The interviewee explained that since 2014, the oil and gas sector has terminated nearly 40.000 workplaces and that the layoffs were still on the rise. These statements concord with articles presented in the archive of two web-pages from the energy sector (Berglun, 2016; Industri Energi, 2016).

To provide more context, the interviewee also refers to the 2018 strike of the trade union SAFE, which took around 600 members out on strike, due to disagreements regarding wages and pension. This conflict resulted in threats of shutting down some of the 29 affected installations related to the offshore oil and gas sector in Norway. Other trade unions of the energy sector, such as Industri og Energi, were not part of the strike, but had members working within the affected installations.

“It's a damn mess, you know? Trade unions compete against each other as well, and guess who pays the price at the end?” ...” They (the oil and gas industries) got rid of a lot of workers, those sons of a gun. From the inside one can see that they produce and produce, the petroleum sector always wins.⁶²

The series of events described by this participant resulted in this worker's ending the membership in the referred trade union. However, when asked about the sense of job security and representativeness without being unionized, the participant expressed that it is like choosing between bad or worse. Unions for this participant were not able to provide the expected coverage, but the worker still believes precarity is higher without the union.

⁶² IO nr 6 group of workers, excel sheet nr 6 (Spanish to English) Es un quilombo de la mierda, cachai? Los sindicatos se lo pasan compitiendo, esa manga e guevones, ¿y adivina quién paga los platos rotos? Han botao harta gente estos sinvergüenzas. Desde dentro uno ve que las petroleras se llevan siempre el premio mayor.

Flexibility from the perspective of workers was also mentioned in relation to the theme crisis. The implications of a more flexible working environment demark an outcome characterized by uncertainty:

“After 2014, the company began to establish a re-hiring system... But this time the guys belong to a new thing called flexy crew, that means you are not in a permanent contract, you just come to work on the boats for two months, some other for three months, then you can fly again to your family and wait to be called again”.⁶³

I saw an announcement for a chief position. I applied to get that job here in my company, because they payment is better, but also because it is a permanent contract... If I can choose, I choose security over a big paycheck one time and the stress back home waiting for them to call me”.⁶⁴

For the group of workers, the understanding of crisis appears attached to senses of threat and risk. Marx’s social analysis of social class formation under capitalist societies warns that capitalist systems create working classes within a dependent and precarious frame (Marx’s description of the proletariat refers to the working classes as a vulnerable share in a society). However, Norway has one of the strongest organized working classes of Europe, a notion that challenges the concept of workers as the weak link of a society. Despite having a high rate of organized workforce, the Working environment Law suffered changes since 2015.

The changes were concerning regulations that gave employers permission to hire people in temporary conditions up to one year, claiming that flexibility would benefit both worker and employee. However, in terms of work safety the changes established in 2015 (Steen, 2015) created unstable conditions for workers in general. Looking at the conditions of industry

⁶³ IO nr 11 group of workers, excel sheet nr 6c and 11^a.

⁶⁴ IO nr 11, Excel sheet nr 11b.

workers related to oil and gas, for instance, the “flexy-jobs” resulted in precarious positions and a general sense of uncertainty, with workers being recruited only for “one mission at a time”:

“After the last oil crisis in 2014, many lost their jobs at the platforms, but were called again as flexy-crew members. What to do? They pay us well and it is probably a matter of time until someone sees that you do your best, leave all in the work and offers a permanent position again”.⁶⁵

“So, yeah, these have been quite tough times for workers because like as a contractor. Looks like they are struggling to get employees and contractors to be working mainly in these COVID times. But still, they don’t want to pay enough or, yeah, they are trying to save money as much as they can. Even with the equipment that we have on board, sometimes you can see that like things are getting old and you cannot use it anymore, and they are still trying to use it and refurbish or do anything to get the job going. Well, yeah, it’s quite difficult”.⁶⁶

This indicates that for investors, crisis is not related to loss, but to a means of economic growth. The decisions aimed at cutting expenses affected workers in terms of contracts and job security. Then workers were called again to work, but this time under the uncertainty of temporary positions. This resulted in a sense of anger and despair, hurting workers’ trust in the intentions behind changes and crisis. This also negatively affected many workers’ trust in trade unions.

5.4.3 The group of trade unions and the theme crisis

Crisis appears in other forms for trade union representatives. Job security is one of the goals of union membership, so when jobs are precarious, this is a crisis for the unions.

⁶⁵ IO nr 6 group of workers, excel sheet nr11c.

⁶⁶ Continuation of IO nr. 6

“A total crisis for us is made from precarious job sources. Workers in the energy sector depend on secure jobs, otherwise what is the point for them to be part of a union? There have been some issues regarding the implementation of wind-power turbines up in the north, and that sets our sources of green workers backwards. I understand that there is not an easy way to transition, somebody always is going to get affected, Sami people was then in the middle of the wind projects. If we want to increase our climate jobs and represent the interests of the green workers, if you wish, it is imperative that some long-term green industry takes place”.⁶⁷

“There is no such thing as a win-win solution, and our role as represents of worker’s rights is to take care that industries and job sources spread in Norway, so we can have workers to protect”.⁶⁸

“I don’t know if you know how things work in Norway with unions, but to put it simple, we are strong because workers choose us. In principle we exist under the premise of cooperation and stronger together. If we get better salaries for our members, all workers get benefited. When a threat towards workers appears, that is when workers realize the importance we have”.⁶⁹

“Because capital pursues more capital, there is a constant need for a strongly organized labor force in Norway as for any place driven by profits”

5.4.4 The group of investors and the theme crisis

The sense of urgency is slowly increasing and so are the efforts to counteract pollutants and environmental effects. Still the Norwegian government seem reluctant.

⁶⁷ IO nr 16 group of trade unions Excel sheet nr 13b

⁶⁸ IO nr 20 group of trade unions Excel sheet nr 13c

⁶⁹ IO nr 29 group of trade unions Excel sheet nr 13 d

“(…) the solution is not closing down the oil and gas industries but try to make them better and adaptable for a fair transition towards greener alternatives (…) the thing is that nobody wants to lose here, but ultimately the workers must adapt to the waves of uncertainty that we all suffer, yeah, in a way it is necessary to have flexibility to hire people when needed and also downsize labor to make our industries adaptable to uncertain times”.⁷⁰

Some participants from the group investors also mentioned a sense of crisis (threat) attached to new investments in a country that keeps a loyal fixation on oil and gas. The lack of an official commitment to finding a future away from fossil fuels created a sense of threatening “our project” within the private sector and a sense that the state does not commit 100% in what this participant understands as the Green Shift:

“Norway doesn’t show enough support to build a green future. I think that we need to have everyone on the same side, but I’m aware that is a difficult task for a **country as Norway obsessed with oil-money.** We started working as resistance against environmental detriment in Norway, over the years we took a turn for the better, we started working in cooperation with industries that develop green solutions for our planet, away from fossil fuels, and minimizing waste. Today we are investors, and some may not like this turn, but I believe this is important, we need a change that generates work for the people, as well as less carbon emissions.... so, **the challenge is to get all to understand this... I can tell you is a win-win... But not until oil and gas stops.**”

5.4.5 Indicators of “Crisis”

As discussed in the section of the group of politicians, the outcome of understanding crisis as an opportunity entailed extra support to investors, and the promotion of investors’ initiatives in

⁷⁰ IO nr 19 group of trade unions Excel sheet nr

the form of policies, laws, and regulations that allow entrepreneurs to establish businesses in different localities. The interviewed politicians spoke often using words such as excitement, renewal, reactivation, opportunity. It is as if the global climate crisis can be a turn of events for the better for Norway. For other participants, the same crisis means threat, as exposed in the section on workers,

“I don’t know what to believe with all these green projects here and there. I see that the company (oil and gas) keeps pumping oil like always, many colleagues hear that we are working in a dying industry, some lost their jobs, but the plans for extractions haven’t stopped. Then the green energies may represent an option, but I don’t see that this sector is willing or wanting to change. The company just made the workers more dispensable, and the unions sometimes do a shitty job in negotiating for our side”.⁷¹

Crisis represents a series of diverse understandings for the different participants; “crisis” is a theme attached to contradictions that at times reflect matters related to climate as an overall global critical situation that requires sacrifices for “Norway”. The use of Norway, however, referring to a common “we” as a fellowship that is experiencing nationwide sacrifices together, represents an interesting start point for this analysis. Although crisis seem to impact differently the different groups of participants, the political participants often use a collective “we” to talk about negative impacts and connotations of “crisis” as transmitting a sense of solidarity in facing circumstances that hint at unavoidable dramatic changes. For example: There is a lot happening right now, a lot related to electricity-based products that represent industrial developments for our area. Many possibilities to take our economy to the next level, hand in hand with environmental solutions:

“We are all in the same boat, a bit scared about the challenges and changes that need to be assumed [by whom?] and then make sure that we make a fair transition. We need to start thinking about what is best for Norway as a whole, and the development of new

⁷¹ IO nr 7, group of workers, Excel sheet nr 6.

industries, sustainable industries, is something that we all need to support and embrace as a solution for our economy and environment”.⁷²

At other times, the participants referred to crisis as opportunities for economic growth. Within the theoretical framework of shock capitalism, a critical environmental situation represents a renewed form of value creation and capitalist advance (Klein, 2007).

However, the perceptions and potential impacts of crisis differs between the groups as well as the understandings of what a crisis represents for each participant, constituting a section that remains fragmented and selective.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Concluding the thesis

The purpose of this thesis was to look at challenges and opportunities for industry workers in Norway under the process of greening the economy, known as the *Green Shift*, looking both at extraction industries (oil and gas) and the introduction of green industrial initiatives in Norway. To achieve this goal, I carried out semi-structured qualitative interviews with 53 individuals who are in various ways connected to the oil and gas sectors and to the so-called *Green Shift* that is taking place in Norway. I interviewed politicians, workers, trade union representatives, and investors, who all expressed a wide variety of opinions and thoughts about the current state of industry in Norway and the green transition that is now taking place. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analysed through the lens of theoretical perspectives from Marx and Foucault. This resulted in the presentation and discussion of various themes and subthemes. The four primary themes that appeared in the data were ‘plan’, ‘cooperation’, ‘competition’, and ‘crisis’.

Plan and its subthemes looked quite different from the various points of view of the different interviewees. The group of political actors expressed a sense of control attached to the sense of

⁷² IO nr 3, group of politicians, excel sheet nr. 7

plan. The group of workers expressed contradictory opinions when referring to the sense of a national strategy or plan, but many had a clear understanding of an individual sense of plan to tackle potential challenges and generate opportunities. Plan for politicians primarily means the subtheme of value creation, allowing the private sector to create profitable investments and therefore jobs. In my data this is true, regardless of their party affiliation. Another subtheme for politicians is outsourcing. For workers, on the other hand, plan's subtheme points towards individualism and individual skill building, in order to make oneself employable within this new industrial sector. Many workers were skeptical regarding the capacity of the Norwegian administration to stand for the interests of workers. Plan for trade unions is related to (re)gaining members in the unions, as well as building credibility as an important balance element in the tripartite model of Norway. Finally, the group investors related to plan as growth and value creation in a country that is driven by hydropower, which entails access to green means of production. The subtheme for investors indicates individual growth.

Cooperation and its subthemes indicate a movement toward supporting investors. Politicians see this group as increasingly important for maintaining a strong and diverse economy. Trade unions see cooperation with investors as important for maintaining civil negotiations based on trust. As for workers, it was important to accept that these are challenging times, and thus workers may experience "together" with investors the oscillations of the market. As for investors, all of these elements, all of these aspects of cooperation, result in more profitable businesses.

Competition and its subthemes explored the different understandings and outcomes of a growing sense of domestic competition, where regions (and their politicians) compete at being the hosts of the best, the newest, the greenest new green industry. For workers, on the other hand, competition means competing with each other for the best jobs, the best salary, the best contracts. For trade unions, competition means competing with each other for the most members; and for investors and employers, competition means competing for the best locations, the best workers, and the best legal frameworks. The primary goal of this competition is a positive economic outcome for all who are involved, but the data at the same time indicated lower senses of solidarity between the various parties.

Crisis and its subthemes were discussed most in depth, in particular with regards to politicians and official documents. For politicians, the outcome of understanding crisis as an opportunity entailed giving extra support to investors, and the promotion of investors' initiatives in the form of policies, laws, and regulations that encourage entrepreneurs to establish new businesses in different localities. The interviewed politicians spoke often using words such as excitement, renewal, reactivation, opportunity. It is as if the global climate crisis can be a turn of events for the better for Norway. For other participants, the same crisis means threat, as exposed in the section on workers; in particular, threats to job security. Crisis represents a series of diverse understandings for the different participants; "crisis" is a theme attached to contradictions that at times reflect matters related to climate as an overall global critical situation that requires sacrifices for "Norway". The use of Norway, however, referring to a common "we" as a fellowship that is experiencing nationwide sacrifices together, represents an interesting aspect of this analysis. Although crisis seems to impact differently the different groups of participants, it is the political participants that most often use a collective "we" to talk about negative impacts and connotations of "crisis" as transmitting a sense of solidarity in facing circumstances that hint at unavoidable dramatic changes. For other groups, this collective "we" is lacking, as the section on competition showed.

What, then, are the challenges and opportunities for industry workers in the Green Shift in Norway? And how do selected politicians, trade union representatives, and investors view the role they play in this process?

The opportunities for industry workers in the Green Shift, according to the data I have collected, are primarily related to workers' capacity to obtain relevant skills within the new industries. In these new industries, they apparently have the opportunity to find good, secure, well-paying jobs.

The challenges for industry workers in the Green Shift are related to a general move away from solidarity toward workers. The apparent lack of commitment from authorities to make a consistent transition towards green industries, while simultaneously keeping alive the oil and gas sectors, has created a general sense of uncertainty among workers. The general support given to investors and the commitment to protecting the interests of the oil and gas sector has

created precarious working conditions noticeable especially in the oil and gas sector. Since the oil crisis in 2014, employment contracts have become unpredictable, letting workers know that their jobs are uncertain. At the same time, they hear that they will need to move into other sectors soon, in particular the green industries. And yet, they see that the oil and gas sectors are being maintained. This creates ambiguity and uncertainty for workers.

The requirement of specific skills in order to obtain permanent contracts has also affected industry workers, causing a general move towards inequality between white-collar workers and blue-collar workers. For the analyzed case of the battery cell gigafactories, the opportunities of entering this sector are limited to operator positions (blue-collar) unless workers obtain the relevant skills and training. Given the inequalities just mentioned, these green opportunities have clear downsides, at least to begin with.

In my data, trade unions have shown that their support is oriented towards the interests of the industrial sector that provides the most stable jobs. This means that the trade unions will probably continue to support the oil and gas sector for the foreseeable future, until politicians and government officials show a serious commitment to a green transition. In addition, the internal issues between representatives from different sectors and different unions makes unions function more like a regular enterprise than as an agent meant to balance power asymmetries and apply their influence to achieve a fair transition. Politicians have shown that they are most interested in profitable investments as a source of jobs in Norway. This means that politicians and investors seem to have a dynamic where they support each others' interests, whereas workers seem overlooked.

These findings challenge Norwegian conceptions of solidarity in an egalitarian society, where the robustness of the Norwegian tripartite system is taken for granted. Working conditions are changing rapidly, however, at a time when the climate crisis is changing the industrial landscape. The negative impacts are not affecting everyone equally, however. In particular, investors and shareholders within the oil and gas sector have not yet lost as much as the common workers seem to have lost. If the Green Shift is to truly be a fair transition, workers' rights in terms of job security should be addressed.

Norway poses an interesting socio-political case to be explored through Foucault's discourse theory: throughout the data the subtle linguistic power of discourse transpired in the descriptions, perceptions and understandings of participants' realities, showing the well-intended arguments to protect 'value creation' as a way to protect people, in this case workers. Depending on their hierarchical positions, the participants influence policies and laws. In a highly regulated country, such as Norway, this results in consequences that impact society, benefiting some groups, and negatively affecting others.

Bringing a classic class struggle theory perspective challenges the self-perceptions and ideals of an egalitarian society, when observing pragmatically that today as in the past those that own the means of production get the greatest support. Still, participants argue that supporting value creation (capital) is a way of supporting jobs, and thus workers. Norway's dependence on capital has excused so far the continuation of the oil and gas industry, exporting guilt to other lands. This represents the biggest challenge nationally in times of a global climate crisis.

6.2 Further research and recommendations

The data provided various insights that shed light on issues not included in this thesis. For instance, 2 out of 53 interviewees were female. This points to gender issues within the oil and gas industry as a potential focus of information. What are the implications of gender within the oil, gas, and extractive industries? Does gender have relevance for achieving a sustainable future? A comparative study of the green sector and the fossil fuel industry in Norway with a particular focus on gender would be an interesting topic to pursue.

Additionally, the battery cell gigafactories seem to indicate an increase of immigrants from abroad due to the need for expertise that Norway does not have. My data indicated that many workers from other countries do not have the same level of trust in trade unions as the Norwegian workers, and many were therefore not organized. Consequently, analyzing the implications for trade unions of green immigration would be relevant. Are Norwegian trade unions capable of convincing workers from abroad about the benefits of organized labor?

Norway's petroleum experience constitutes a strong exhibit of the country's capacity to take control and stand for themselves, creating a new industry from scratch. The petroleum industry provided Norway with unimaginable wealth. Norway's past oil history demonstrated audacity,

creativity, bravery, and dedication. Norway now has the opportunity to use these qualities to work toward a sustainable present and a future, while maintaining social democratic values, if the need for a drastic change toward sustainability and green alternatives is acknowledged. The country currently possesses the richest SWF in the world and manages a robust economy. Perhaps it is now time for Norway to take a stand regarding the *Green Shift*, in cooperation between the different groups in the society that I have interviewed for this thesis. For a change to truly take place, politicians, workers, trade unions and investors will all have to pull in the same direction. Given the tradition of cooperation and solidarity that many of my informants expressed as an aspect of Norwegian self-understanding, this is not unthinkable.

7 References

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Appendices

List of questions in the semi-structured interviews

Trade unions:

1. Tell me about your experience regarding representing workers in the energy sector.
2. What are the potential challenges you observe regarding energy workers and the Green Shift?
3. In your opinion, how secure you feel the employees are/would be during this energy transition in Norway?
4. How would you describe the importance of trade unions in Norway for a fair and green transition?
5. If you could choose. What would the perfect scenario look like for workers?
6. Who can I contact next?

Politicians:

1. Tell me about your experience as a political representative in this area.
2. What is your concept of a fair transition and a green transition?
3. What are Norway's arguments to keep oil and gas industries in times when the negative impacts of fossil fuels are strongly connected to climate change?
4. How would you describe your experience regarding policies related to Norwegian workers? Is your work relevant to avoid precarious working conditions?
5. What would you say your role is in making the Green Shift a reality?
6. Who can I contact next?

Investors:

1. Tell me about your background as an entrepreneur in Norway.
2. How is your industry green? / How is your industry sustainable (oil and gas)?
3. What type of challenges do you experience as an investor in Norway?
4. What are the characteristics you look for in a worker?
5. What is your relationship with trade unions and organized labor?
6. Who can I contact next?

Workers:

1. Tell me about yourself, your experience as an industrial worker in Norway
2. What type of challenges do you experienced as an industry worker in Norway?
3. How would you feel about changing your sector for green industries?
4. How is your company approaching climate change?
5. What is your experience with unions in Norway?
6. Who can I contact next?

Introductory letter given to the interviewees

Are you interested in taking part in the research project ” *Worker’s rights under the Green Transition* ”?

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to account the potential challenges regarding worker’s rights under the Norwegian energy transition, in other words, how is the green shift affecting Norwegian workers in the industrial sector, and what is the roll of trade unions during this process. In this letter we will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

To highlight and identify the roll of trade unions during the green shift in Norway, especially in the area of Agder community.

Who is responsible for the research project?

NMBU (The Norwegian University of Life Sciences) is the institution responsible for the project.

Why are you being asked to participate?

As the student running this project I considered your background and expertise as crucial for my research, since from your position you could provide important aspects of elements taking place during the green shift in Norway.

What does participation involve for you?

There are two types of methods I include in this research.

1. Interviews, the interviews last from 45 minutes to 1 hour approximately. I follow a semi structured model, which means five questions will be asked to you, you can choose to answer or skip any of them, or/and add information you consider relevant to the topic of study that maybe is not covered by the questionnaire. I will record the interview.
2. an online survey. It will take approx. 10 to 15 minutes. The survey includes questions about opinions and experiences as a worker/ union representative / Executive regarding industry in Norway. Your answers will be recorded electronically.

All information will be anonymized in the project.

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act). The data will be accessible for the student running the research and the supervisor. To guarantee data privacy all collected data is locked away and encrypted.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The project is scheduled to end spring June 2022, after this date all data will be destroyed-deleted.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU), NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

The data protection officer at NMBU is Hanne Pernille Gulbrandsen

(personvernombud@nmbu.no)

Carmen Beatriz Marta Mapis, 0047 48 094 572, Student,

John-Andrew McNeish

PO.Box 5003, NO-1432 Ås, Akershus. Norway

Office: +47 6723 1357

Mobile: +47 97016014

- Our Data Protection Officer:
- NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email: (personvertjenester@nsd.no) or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,

Project Leader
(Researcher/supervisor)

Student

Consent form

Consent can be given in writing (including electronically) or orally. NB! You must be able to document/demonstrate that you have given information and gained consent from project participants i.e. from the people whose personal data you will be processing (data subjects). As a rule, we recommend written information and written consent.

- For written consent on paper you can use this template
- For written consent which is collected electronically, you must chose a procedure that will allow you to demonstrate that you have gained explicit consent (read more on our website)
- If the context dictates that you should give oral information and gain oral consent (e.g. for research in oral cultures or with people who are illiterate) we recommend that you make a sound recording of the information and consent.

If a parent/guardian will give consent on behalf of their child or someone without the capacity to consent, you must adjust this information accordingly. Remember that the name of the participant must be included.

Adjust the checkboxes in accordance with participation in your project. It is possible to use bullet points instead of checkboxes. However, if you intend to process special categories of personal data (sensitive personal data) and/or one of the last four points in the list below is applicable to your project, we recommend that you use checkboxes. This because of the requirement of explicit consent.

I have received and understood information about the project [*insert project title*] and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- to participate in an interview (*insert method, e.g. an interview*)
- to participate in a survey online
- to provide information regarding your political views
- to provide information regarding union membership

- for my/my child's teacher to give information about me/my child to this project (*include the type of information*)– if applicable
- for my personal data to be processed outside the EU – if applicable
- for information about me/myself to be published in a way that I can be recognised (*describe in more detail*)– if applicable
- for my personal data to be stored after the end of the project for (*insert purpose of storage e.g. follow-up studies*) – if applicable

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. [*insert date*]

(Signed by participant, date)



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