

RE-INTEGRATE

Employer Consultation

NORWAY

Return to Work
An Integrated e-learning Environment
A Leonardo project: 2007 to 2009

Aim of the Consultation

- To gather your views (as managers, HR personnel and other experts) on a new approach to raising the awareness of employers about best practice in successful return to work for long term absent employees – the Re-Integrate Website and Tools

Agenda for the Session

1. An introduction to current issues in return to work
2. Break
3. Presentation of the Re-Integrate Website and Tools
4. Discussion of the usefulness and relevance of these in this country

The importance of improving return to work outcomes

- Return to Work has become a major concern for employers in most countries
- Costs of absence are considerable for employers, employees, insurers and families
- The biggest element of absenteeism is long-term (over 20 days)
- The longer a worker is out the less the chance of return
- People who have been absent for twelve months have a 1% chance of returning to work in the following year

The Costs of Long Term Absence (UK)

According to research conducted by Confederation of British Industry (CBI):

- long-term absence (20 days or more) accounted for 43% of all working time lost (2005)
- At a cost of £5.8bn (2005),
- Absence costs £537 per employee and accounted for 3.3 per cent of working time (2006),

The Costs of Long Term Absence (UK)

According to research conducted by Confederation of British Industry (CBI):

- the best performing companies offering rehabilitation programmes and flexible working lost only 2.7 days per employee, while the worst lost 12 days (2006).

The Costs of Long Term Absence (UK)

- More recent figures (2007) produced by CIPD, based on a survey of human resource managers, estimated :
 - average annual level of absence as 3.7%, or 8.4 working days per employee,
 - average reported cost of absence of £659 per employee per year,
 - a reported 31% increase in stress-related absence compared with a year earlier.

National Context

The Benefits of Return to Work -The Employer

- Productivity maintained
- Reduced Absenteeism
- Enhanced Staff Morale
- Decreased Replacement/Training Costs
- Retention of knowledge and skills
- Increased staff loyalty
- Reduced unwanted early retirement
- Reduced risks to quality

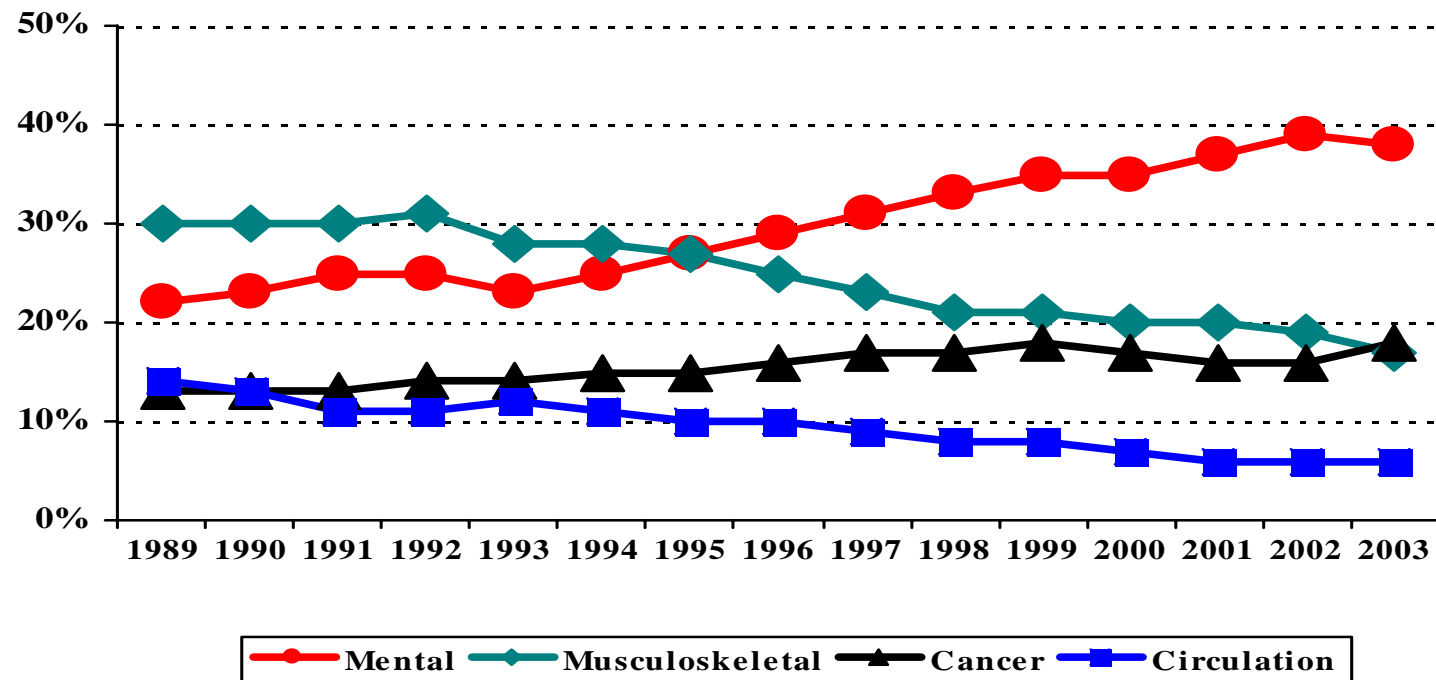
The Benefits of Return to Work -The Worker

- Maintaining his/her ability to work
- Income maintained
- Self-esteem protected
- Improved mental and physical health
- Maintained social contacts
- Avoids social exclusion

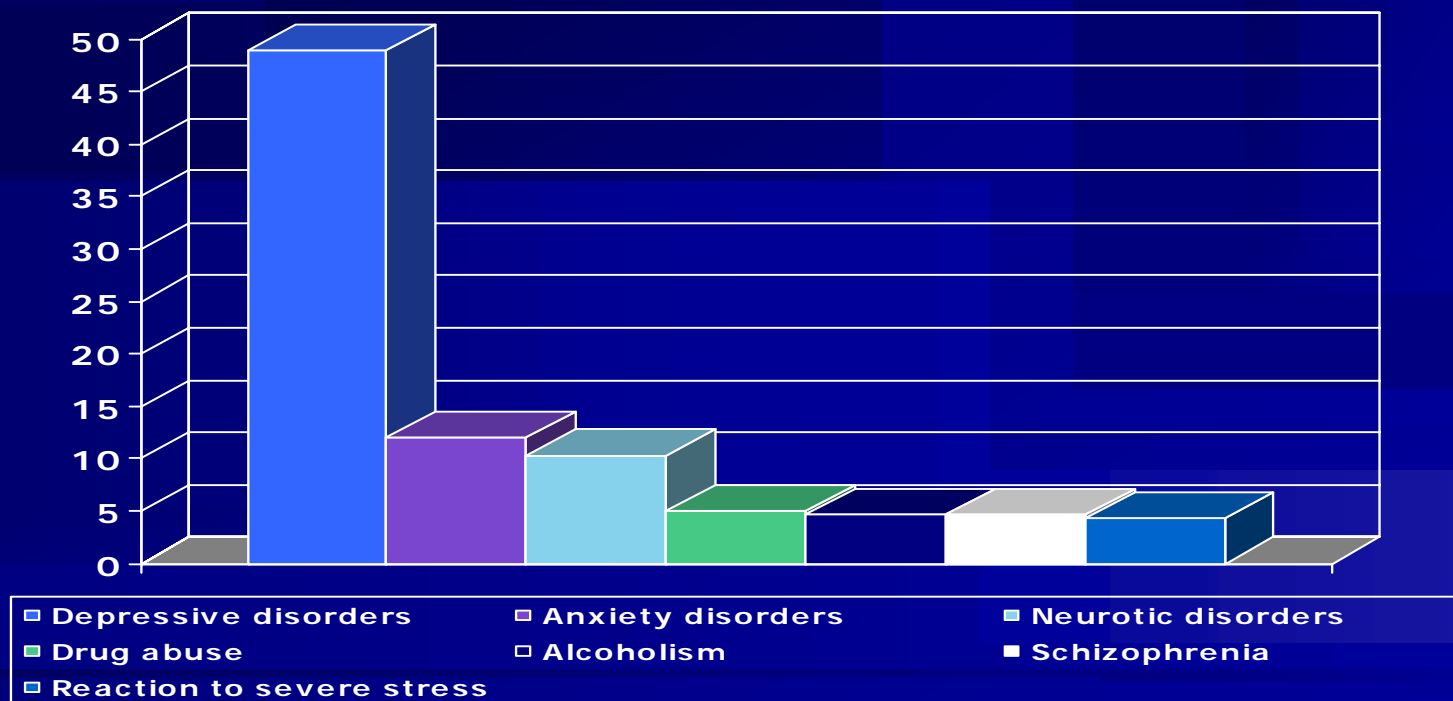
Some fundamentals

- Most absence is not work related
- More absence due to illness will occur as the workforce ages
- Mental ill health will be a greater cause of absence over time
- Labour market policy at EU level is pushing towards job retention

Mental ill-health as reason for early retirement in Germany



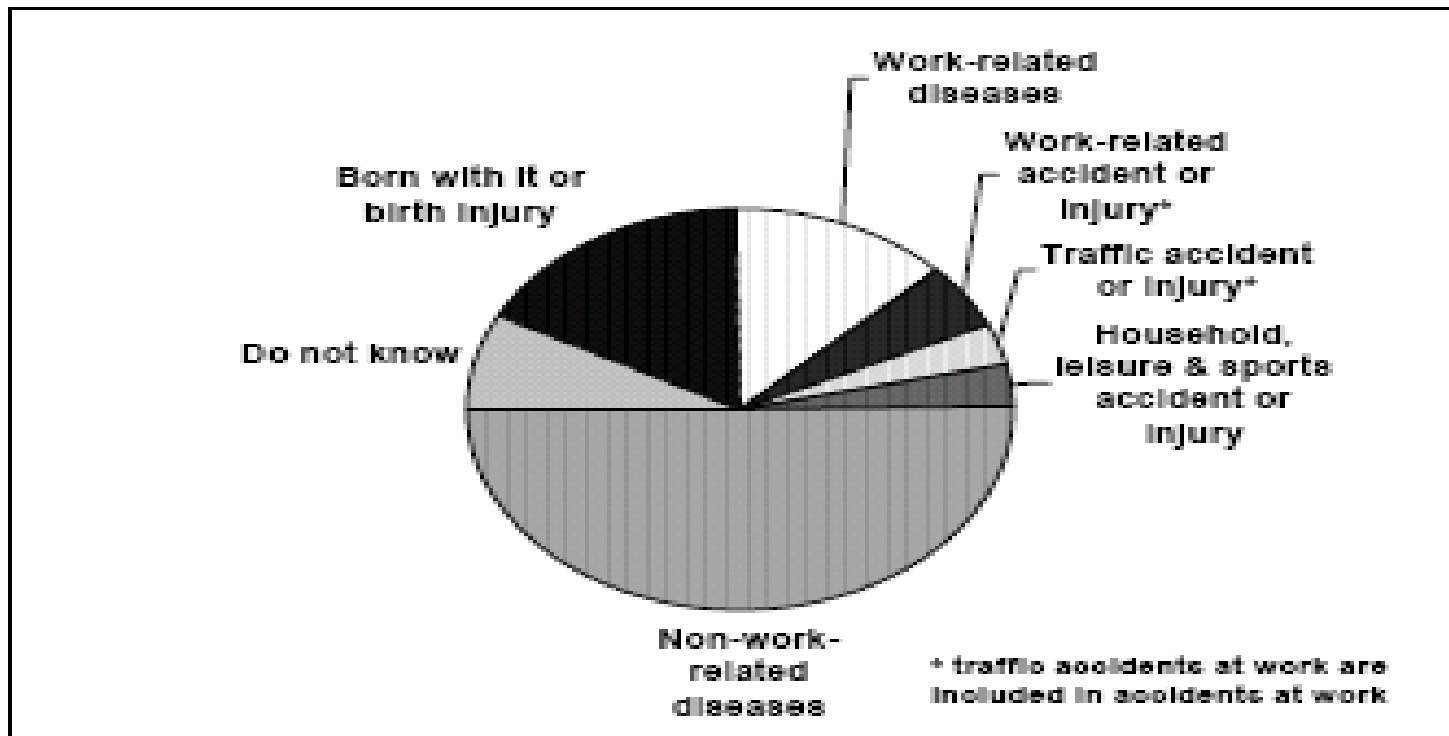
Mental Health Disorders and absence



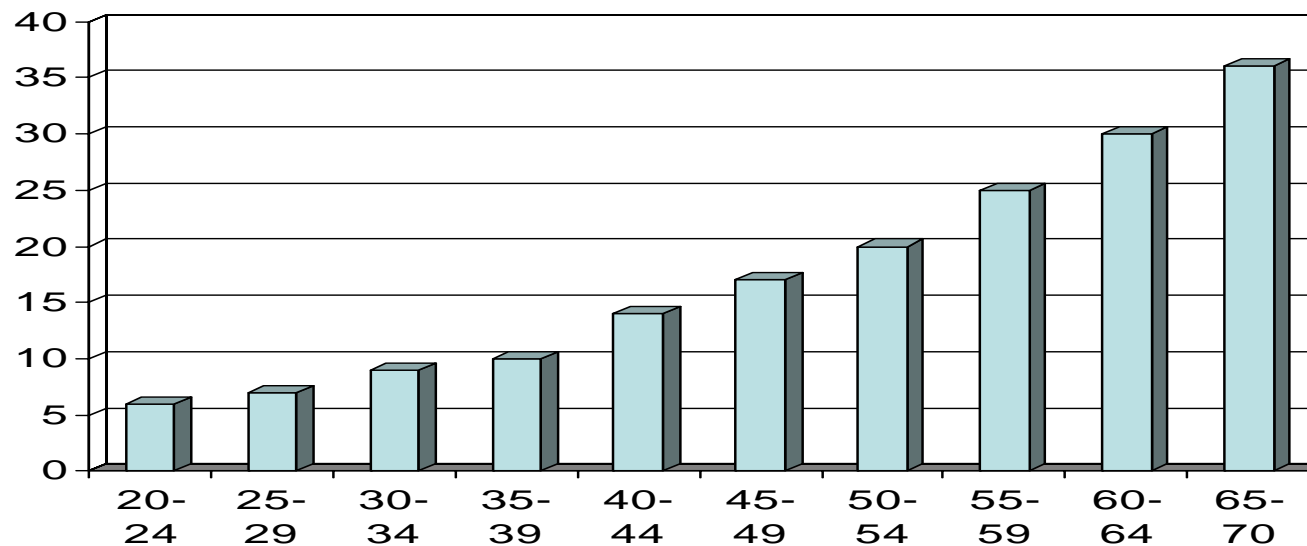
28/10/2008

25th ENWHP meeting, Ljubljana

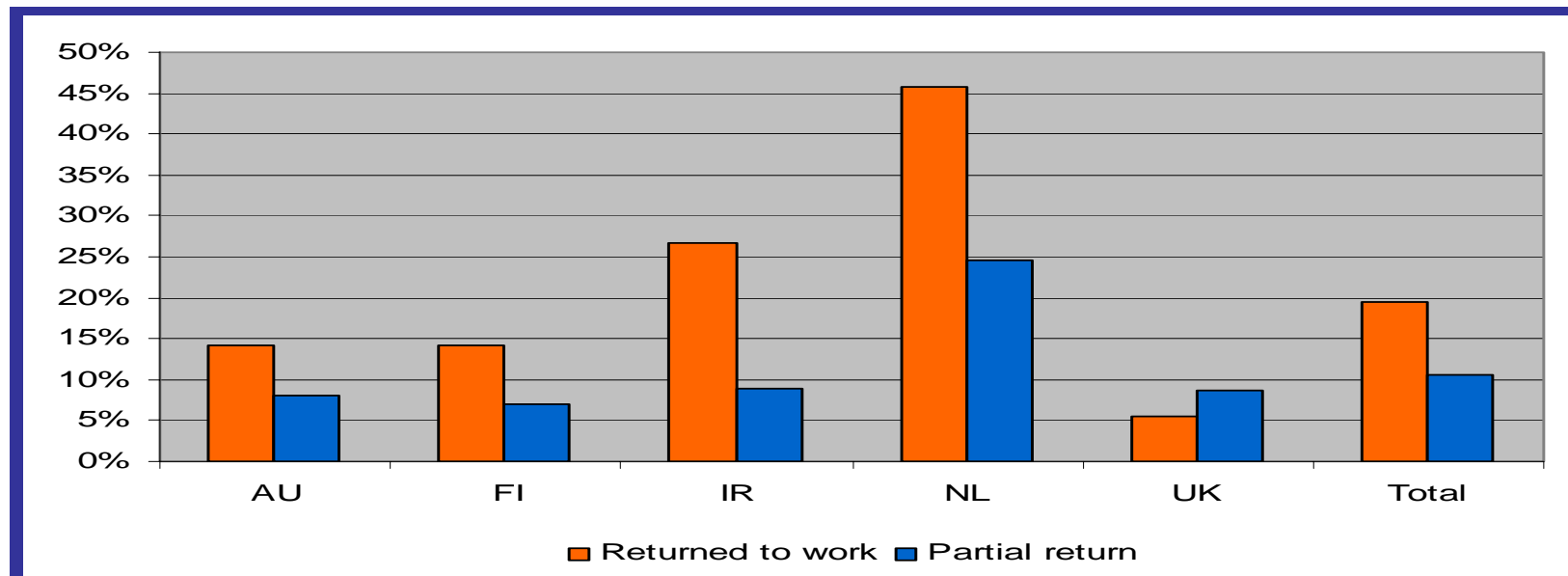
A comparison of causes of Long Standing Health Problem and Disability in the EU (*Eurostat, 2003*)



Persons with a chronic illness or disability by age group in the EU – working age

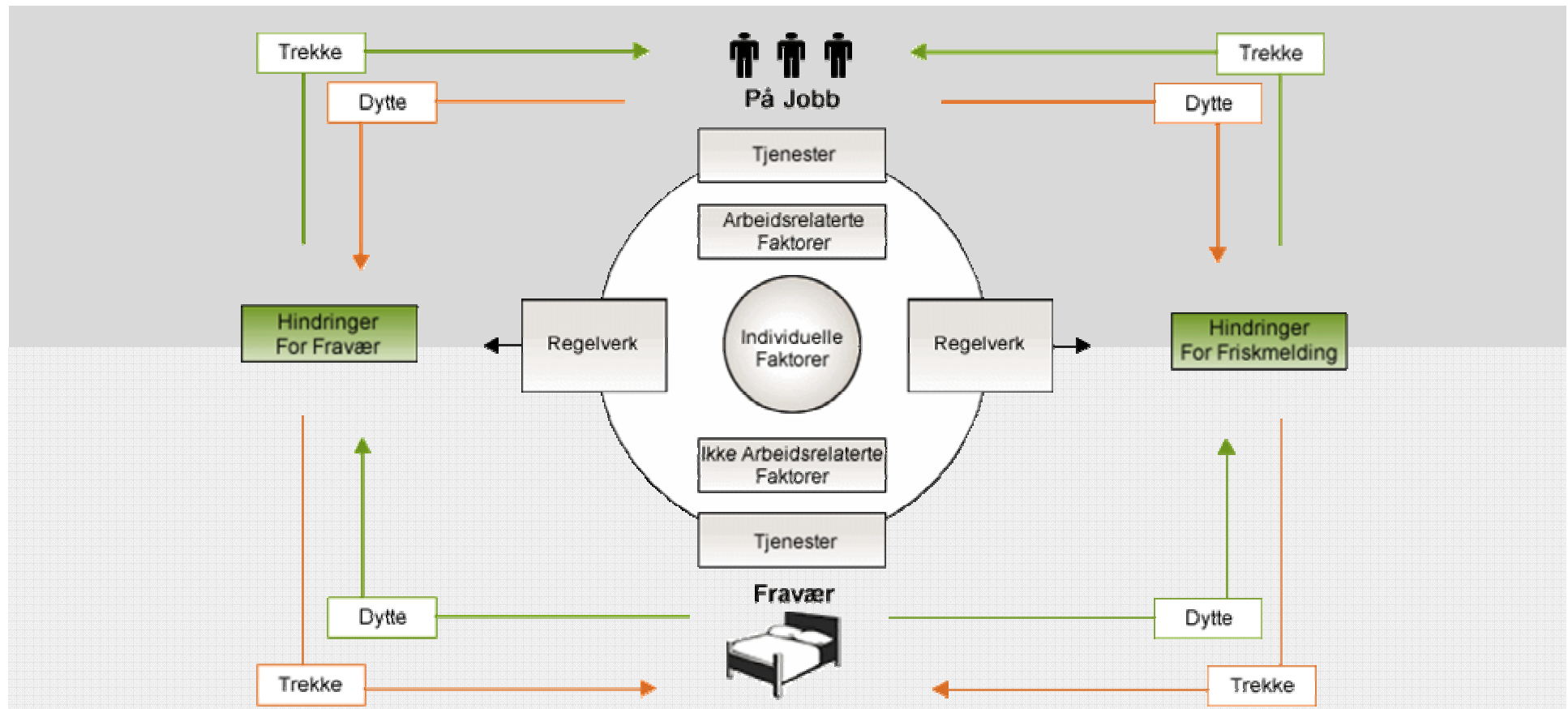


Return to Work can be done better (Data from 5 EU Member States)



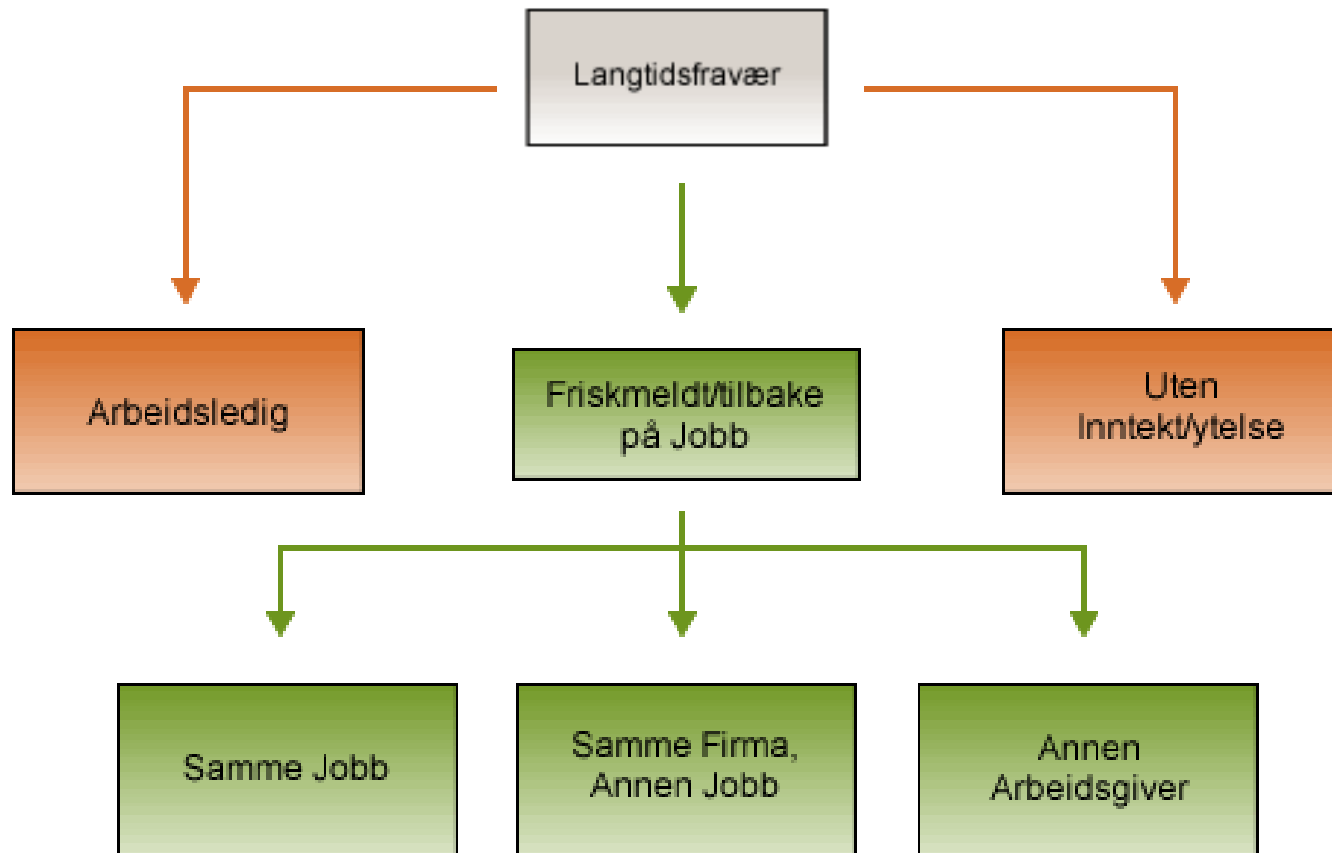
The Re-Integrate Approach - The Absence and Return to Work Threshold

Utfordringer/faktorer Ved Fravær og Tilbake Til Jobb



The Re-Integrate Approach - Return to Work Outcomes

Intenciver – Tilbake til Jobb/friskmelding



The absence threshold (n=2000)

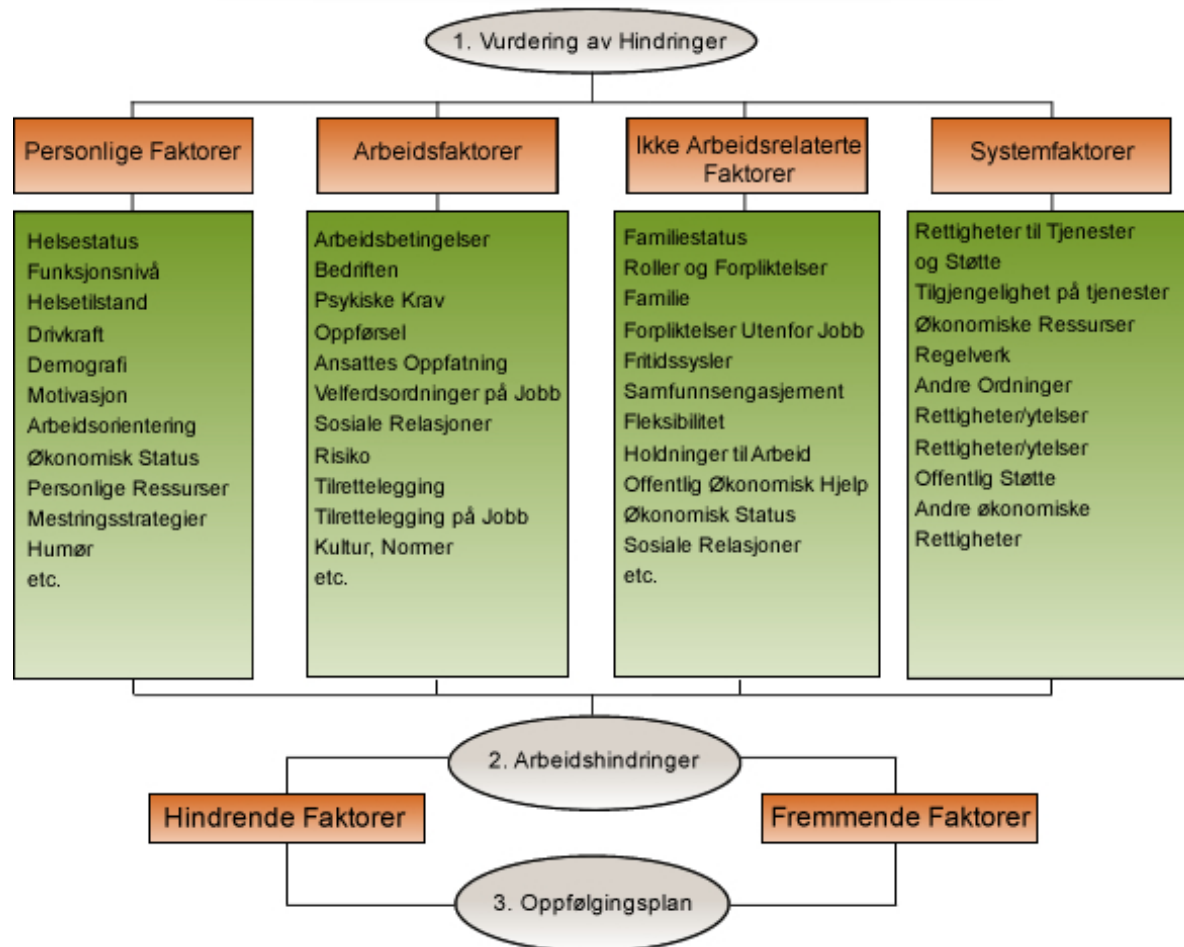
- **Increased likelihood**
 - Health
 - Physical
 - Mental
 - Co-morbid
 - Traumatic Injury
 - Significant Event
 - Personal Problems
 - Family Problems
- **Reduced likelihood**
 - Low Income
 - Thinking about it
 - Family responsibilities
 - Responsibility for staff
 - Specialist role
 - Not wanting to be seen as lazy
 - Working while ill

The return to work threshold (Stress Impact)

- **Increased likelihood**
 - Formal RTW System
 - Improved Health
 - Need/desire to return
 - Fear of job loss
 - Boredom
 - Need to face bully
 - Company needs
 - Maintain mental health
 - Occupational Health
 - Financial Pressure (
 - Workplace Support/Practical Help
 - Good communications with absentee
- **Reduced likelihood**
 - Being over 55
 - Being depressed
 - Job Insecurity
 - Length of absence
 - Low income
 - Lack of formal system
 - Delay in seeking absence
 - Workload
 - New, unfamiliar tasks
 - New conditions required
 - Lack of accommodations
 - Failure to rectify negative conditions
 - Poor mental health

Threshold Assessment Approach

- **THIS SLIDE TO BE DEVELOPED BY TILIA as per next slide**



Two examples of the Return to Work Threshold – Individual Factors

- **Alice**

- Low Back Pain (Occupational Injury)
- Female, 28 years old
- €35,000 p.a.
- Acute back strain
- No other conditions
- Smoker and Drinker
- 12 weeks
- Very enthusiastic and motivated
- Three years
- Always sees to the bright side of problems

- **Brian**

- Low Back Pain (Non-occupational)
- Male, 50 years old
- €75,000 p.a. (50% of this is performance related)
- Chronic, muscular
- Has complained of stress
- Regular walker and Golfer
- This is third episode – 12 weeks
- Is a loyal and reliable worker
- 20 years
- Can be cynical at times

Two examples of the Return to Work Threshold – Work Factors

- **Alice**

- ICT Support Technician
- Low Control and High Support
- Flexible Hours, Team Work
- Adaptations possible
- High Stress
- Indoors
- Other people with disabilities employed
- This is a stepping stone
- Occ. Health Nurse, HR and Employee Assistance Programme
- Work life balance

- **Brian**

- Engineer
- High Control and Low Support
- Shift Work, Working alone
- No Adaptations possible
- Low Stress
- Outdoors, Wet, Cold and Uneven Ground
- No people with disabilities employed
- This is his career
- No job site supports
- High performance orientation in the company

Two examples of the Return to Work Threshold – Non-Work Factors

- **Alice**

- Single, Living alone
- Only self to care for
- No Family Support
- Mainly Casual Social Relationships
- Rented apartment

- **Brian**

- Children
- Wife has job
- Older parents living alone needing regular visits
- Second mortgage
- Broad established network of acquaintances and friends

Two examples of the Return to Work Threshold – Services

- **Alice**

- Written Health & Safety Policy and Staff
- On site occupational health nurse
- HR Department of 3 members of staff
- Employee and Family Assistance Programmes (EFAP)
- Health monitoring

- **Brian**

- External provider of Health & Safety Services
- Pre-employment screening only
- No HR Department
- No EFAP
- No Health Monitoring

Two examples of the Return to Work Threshold – System Factors

- **Alice**

- No personal health insurance
- Only private services available for a fee
- Application to Labour Office for support has not been made
- Active employee support internally
- She is taking a legal case against the employer for financial compensation
- Statutory sick pay only

- **Brian**

- Health insurance and incomes protection
- All services are available free
- Job Retention Grant Available (€15,000)
- No active employee support policy
- No legal case
- 50% of salary for 6 months

An EU Initiative to Address the Issue

- The Re-Integrate approach is based on:
 - Over 10 years of research into the issue at EU level
 - A survey of 2000 absent workers in 5 EU Member States
 - A training needs analysis of employers
 - A comprehensive literature review of current good practice

Countries Involved

- Ireland
- Belgium
- Greece
- Portugal
- The Netherlands
- Norway
- Italy
- Slovenia
- Hungary
- Canada

Re-Integrate aims:

- Base on international research and best practice to:
 - Create a set of tools for employers to help get employees back to work after long-term absence
 - An e-learning course
 - A self assessment of knowledge questionnaire
 - A review of company return to work policy and practice questionnaire
 - A face to face training course.

Re-Integrate aims:

- To transfer the knowledge and skills to other countries
- Try out the training and assessment tools
- To explore the relevance and sustainability of tools

Re-Integrate e-learning materials

Website Demonstration

Reintegrate Face to Face Training for Employers - Structure

- 1 day course (4 Sessions)
- Aimed at Human Resource Personnel and other Staff with responsibility for managing long term absence in enterprises
- It is based on the e-learning materials

Reintegrate Face to Face Training for Employers - Objectives

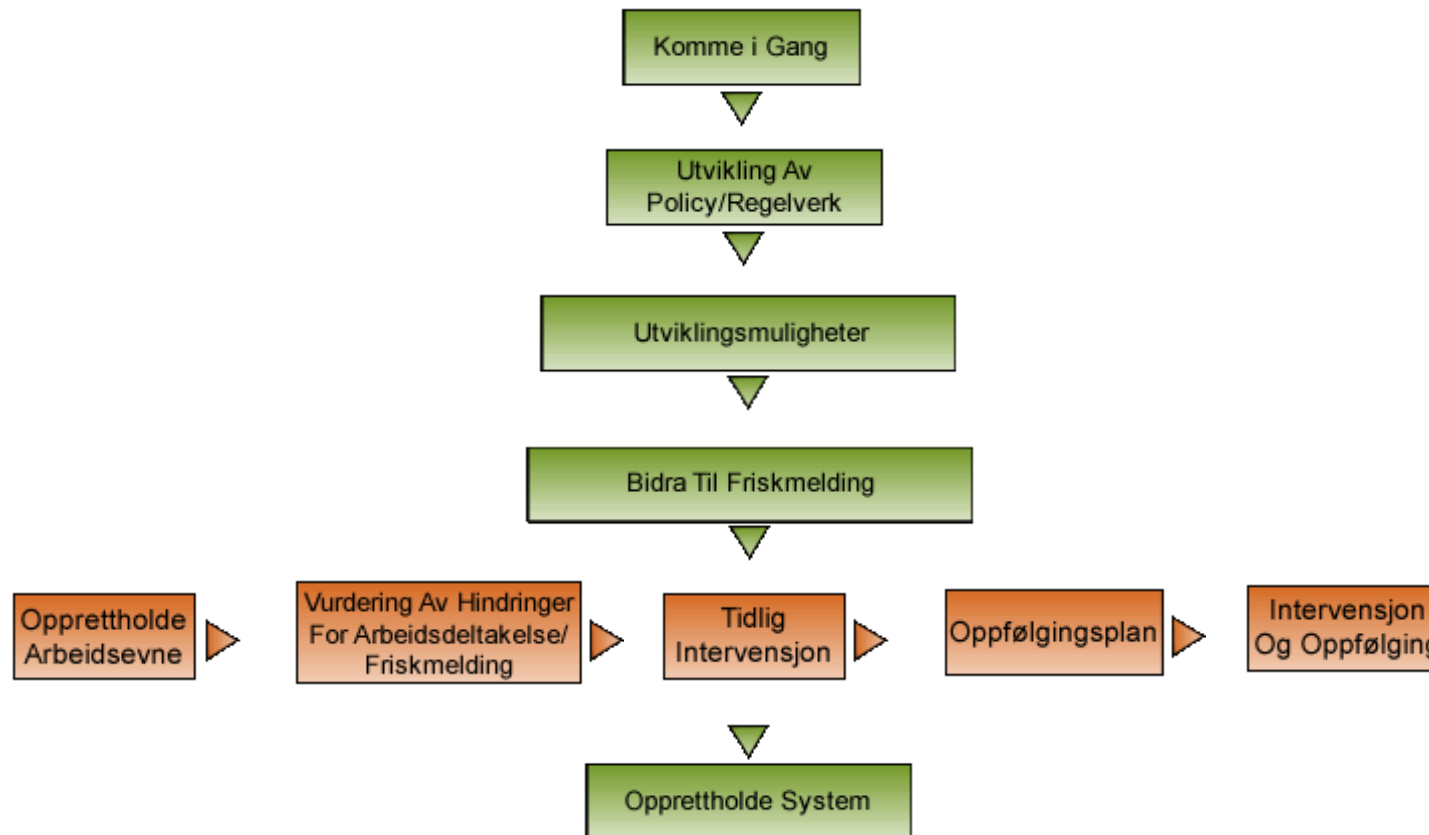
- Raise participant's awareness of the business case for intervening early to assist absent workers to return to work,
- Introduce them to good practice in managing return to work,
- Provide them with an overview of key strategies to achieve better return to work outcomes
- Introduce them to the Reintegrate website-learning environment.

Reintegrate Face to Face Training for Employers – Course Elements

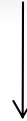
1. The drivers for more active return to work approaches by employers
2. The business case for active return to work policies and practices
3. The dynamics of absence and return to work processes
4. Introducing good return to work policy and practice into your organisation

Reintegrate Face to Face Training for Employers - Approach

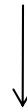
Oversikt Over "Face to Face"- Trening



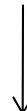
Getting Started



Policy Development



Building & Maintaining Capacity



Getting the employee back to work



System Maintenance

Getting the employee back to work



Topics for Employer Consultation

- Explore the national context for absence and return to work in this country
- Gather comments on e-learning and assessment tools
- Explore the relevance and sustainability of such tools